# The Nation.

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OCT 10

EDITORIAL

## HAITI'S OLD ORDER RISES

Of all the newborn democracies touted by the U.S. government as vindicating its Latin American policies during the past decade and a half, only Haiti's had true legitimacy. Not a lesser evil voted into power by a small minority—as in El Salvador, Guatemala and Panama—Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, an outspoken Catholic priest, became a candidate and President in spite of U.S. policy; in fact, this nationally and internationally respected figure was a favorite bête noire of the U.S. Embassy and was discouraged by various American officials from pursuing his candidacy.

Now Aristide is in exile and his Cabinet in hiding, while a military junta rules the streets of Port-au-Prince, exterminating all protest. So far, more than a hundred people have been killed.

In part, the coup is a result of Aristide's subtle and not so subtle attempts to control Haiti's always renegade armed forces. In larger measure, it is a result of his frontal challenges to exploitation in his country. Aristide's program of moderate but adamant social reform has earned him the hatred of Haiti's economic elite, a clique that despises democracy and historically has manipulated the army.

It is hard to see how the junta can stay in power for long if there is international resolve to isolate Haiti. Besides condemning the coup and sending emissaries to confront the regime, the O.A.S. should follow through with stern coordinated measures. Washington should second these, but it must do more: apply direct pressure on a military with which it has always had close ties.

Haitians are virtually unanimous in their rejection of this regime. Sometimes history repeats itself only as a last gasp of an old, dying world. This is the second full-fledged coup organized against Aristide's government. Democrats everywhere are hopeful that it will be toppled, and that it will be the last.


***RUST*-ING N.E.A.?**
**Allan Parachini**

**BILLY GRAHAM AND FRIENDS**
**Edward Sorel**

**DAMMING OF NATIVE LANDS**
**Steve Turner**
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**COMMUNISM BOLOGNESE**
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**Gene Santoro**


1492 AND ALL THAT

## ROLL ON, COLUMBUS, ROLL ON

KIRKPATRICK SALE

The first of the many fictional uses of the figure we know as Christopher Columbus—and "uses," in its most exploitative sense, is assuredly the right word—was in 1581, less than a century after his achievement of finding new lands in the Ocean Sea had been announced to the world. The instrument was an epic poem in Latin by Lorenzo Gambara, in four long books of more than 120 pages, which told with some degree of accuracy the historical events of the Columbian voyages and made their perpetrator a heroic character carrying out the mission of the Catholic Church with the explicit blessings of the Virgin Mary (who appeared in a portrait in the second edition, in 1583) and the Lord Himself. It was a surprisingly popular rendering, considering that the hero was serving a Spanish crown not much beloved by Italians, and it even earned a third edition, in 1585.

Columbus has been appropriated by virtually every Western nation, in every age, with every art form, to serve one purpose after another, sometimes with the Creator's blessings, sometimes not. In 1563 he was the hero of an English broadside, in 1574 of a French verse, in 1617 of a Spanish drama, in 1690 of an Italian opera, in 1701 of a Spanish *poema heroyco*, in 1788 of an American book-length poem, in 1795 of a German sonnet. In the nineteenth century he inspired, in English alone, several hundred poems, fourteen plays and seven operas, nine novels and three short stories; in the twentieth century, at least eleven book-length poems, forty-five novels, fifty-one plays and operas, a musical show (by Meredith Willson), a radio play (by

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# EXCHANGE.

## MAN-BASHING

*Chicago*

You are to be commended for printing Peter Marin's excellent July 8 article, "The Prejudice Against Men." While Marin addresses himself to the unacknowledged problems of the homeless male, his observations apply to all men. The refusal to recognize that men, including white, heterosexual men, have needs, are weak and vulnerable, crave warmth and affection and can be as dependent as anyone is the great denial of our time—a denial fostered by men and women, leftists and conservatives, feminists and others. The left has played into the myth of the all-powerful, privileged male and joined forces with feminists and the gay/lesbian community in perpetuating a stereotype of the white, heterosexual male as some kind of a monster—without feeling, loaded with privilege and undeserving of respect—somebody to be bashed. Marin's article is a long-overdue correction of this pernicious stereotype and deserves a wide audience. I, for one, would like to see more attention to this issue in the pages of *The Nation*.

*Harry Zitzler*

## WOMAN GNASHING

*San Francisco*

I've watched the Robert Bly phenomenon with horror (the trouble with men is women—thinly concealed), and I've also noticed with increasing concern the reactionary trend of the current controversy over "political correctness." But now I'm really upset. Prejudice against men? Who are we kidding? And why does *The Nation* nourish such confusion?

Peter Marin is right about one observation. I work once a week at a soup kitchen and I know that the greater percentage of the down-and-out are single men. Marin is also right about some of the concrete reasons for this: changes in the type of marginal jobs available; women taking more pains to stay off the street because the street is a more dangerous place for them than for men (lest we forget, it is men who make it more dangerous); and welfare's tendency to support women with children, shutting out men. He's also right that as a society we expect men to avoid dependency and thus we tend to judge homeless men more harshly than homeless women. But prejudice?

Who, pray tell, holds this prejudice against men? Women? As a woman who is also a feminist, I might concede to that accusation, but even all women's collective negative feelings about men do not carry with them the power to oppress. Other men, even the poorest of whom could always lord it over a woman? For centuries our patriarchal class society has benefited certain men. It has not benefited anyone else. It has also, since it is predicated on class and race privilege, cost some men dearly. As it is falling apart, it is apparently sacrificing even more men. But I think it is dangerous indeed for us to forget who—in the end—has stood on top of the power pyramid. It's not prejudice at work here, but it might be some chickens coming home to roost.

*Judith Brady*

## OPINIONS CLASHING

*Washington*

Peter Marin's recent article on homeless men is a disappointing undertaking by an otherwise astute observer. The article's thesis seems to be that "most" (58 percent) homeless people are men because men are "neither supposed nor allowed to be dependent." But locating the cause of male homelessness in societal attitudes toward men creates only confusion.

The article begins with a number of valid points. Contemporary American culture surely does denigrate "helplessness" in men. American cultural bias may also disproportionately penalize men in need. Homeless men probably are perceived with less sympathy than homeless women or children. Marin also correctly points out one of the many ways in which the federal welfare system is unfair: Men receive benefits either not at all or with difficulty. Two-parent households—where a male is present—are discouraged.

But the argument goes utterly wrong when it crosses the line from perception to reality, from observation to causal analysis. To suggest that homelessness among men is attributable to societal prejudice against male need is without basis. And it obscures the real causes of—and solutions to—a glaring social injustice.

Essentially, the argument is premised on a comparison between the conditions faced by poor women with those faced by poor men. Poor women, the article seems to say, have it easier: Welfare provides for women, there are "far better" private and public shelters for women and in any event women have the "option" of being wives or bearing children. But pitting poor men against poor women—even for purposes of analysis—seems senseless. Rather than contrast poor men with poor women, it may be more relevant to contrast the rich with the poor.

Increasing numbers of people—men, women and children—are homeless in America today for two primary reasons. First, there is a dire shortage of affordable housing. Second, there is a simultaneous lack of adequate income—through work or welfare—among moderate- and low-income people. As a result, middle-class Americans are increasingly unable to afford homeownership. Poor Americans are increasingly doubling up. The poorest of the poor are hitting the streets.

The public policy choices underlying these developments are not mysterious. During the 1980s, federal housing programs were cut by more than 70 percent. Aid to Families with Dependent Children was cut. And the minimum wage lost over a quarter of its value during that period. Indeed, during the 1980s—the decade homelessness skyrocketed—the rich got richer and the poor got poorer. The article does note that American society is dominated by "certain" men. This point—with its implication that power, not gender, is the relevant factor—is critically important. Yet Marin barely touches on it.

As a psychological point, the article's thesis—that men as well as women suffer from gender stereotypes—undoubtedly is valid. Societal aversion to male helplessness may explain the relative lack of public sympathy for homeless men. It may also provide an important explanation for the lack of even inadequate welfare benefits for "able-bodied" men. But gender stereotypes cannot account for the causes that thrust men—and women—into poverty and homelessness in the first place.

And in the end, the analysis of perception is also flawed. Despite its initial thesis that homeless men are the most desperate victims of social stereotypes that punish male need, the article concludes by embracing a different, but similarly destructive, set of stereotypes. Perhaps unintentionally, Marin ends by equating homeless men with "troubled" men. Most men on the street, he says, have been " 'orphaned' in some way."

This new but all too common stereotype leads to another question: Are these men simply irresponsible? Marin rightly rejects this conclusion; instead, he says that homeless men are simply less able to "tolerate" stress. But he does not consider whether destitute men may also lack the material resources—from doctors to vacations to homes—that help the rest of "us" handle stress.

This article is troubling because it takes two important and timely topics—homelessness and gender stereotypes—and mixes them together in a way that produces misleading conclusions. I have no quarrel with psychological analyses of social phenomena. But when such analyses displace and replace economic and political realities, and when they lead to new stereotypes, they can become a hindrance rather than a help. Each analysis has its place; it's important to keep clear where that place is.

*Maria Foscarinis, director*
*National Law Center on*
*Homelessness & Poverty*

## MARIN REPLIES

*Santa Barbara, Calif.*

Letters to *The Nation* about this article broke down along gender lines. Men liked it. Women didn't. That's disheartening to me, because most of the women who vetted or read it elsewhere were moved or at least undisturbed. Does this tell us something about *Nation* readers? I'm not sure.

The sad part is that there exists an obvious *community* of suffering in our society, and until its various members are less bitter, factionalized and competitive with one another,

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# EDITORIALS.

## Shrinkmanship

Until very recently, the term "unilateral disarmament" was used mainly as a taunt to silence advocates of nuclear disarmament. So potent was this pejorative that only the most vigorous proponents of arms control would consider unilateral initiatives as a route to disarmament. And yet, on September 27, the President of the United States—a Republican and a staunch advocate of a strong military—announced the most sweeping program of unilateral nuclear disarmament since the onset of the cold war.

Clearly, political expediency and opportunism had a lot to do with the President's decision. Our European allies have been pushing Washington to withdraw U.S. tactical nuclear arms from their territory, and Congress has been increasingly reluctant to vote funds for weapons that have no plausible use. Why not, Bush must have reasoned, make a virtue of necessity and glean the political benefits of appearing as a bold and visionary disarmer when the weapons would have to be eliminated sooner or later anyway?

But there is more at work here than opportunism. The breakup of the Soviet Union and the emergence of armies in its constituent republics pose the very real threat of untrained and undisciplined ethnic forces armed with tactical nuclear

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weapons. This is a prospect from which no instrument of cold war preparedness, no product of "peace through strength," can adequately protect us. Our only real defense against such weapons is to arrange for their elimination. But how to do this, given the chaotic conditions in the Soviet Union? Conventional arms-control approaches, entailing protracted negotiations between U.S. and Soviet officials, could take years—and in the meantime, Soviet central control over the weapons would surely diminish, if not crumble altogether. The only remaining option is to seek prompt Soviet elimination of the weapons *without* a treaty, and that can be done only by a U.S. promise to eliminate its own weapons in advance.

Bush's move also reflects a perception that global events are spinning out of control, even slipping into anarchy, and that old methods of promoting "national security" are increasingly obsolete. To insure U.S. paramountcy in the chaotic world of the future, the United States must, in Bush's view, tailor its forces for quick and lethal intervention against regional foes like Saddam Hussein. Nuclear weapons will play no role in such encounters—the international reaction would be too hostile—but large numbers of high-tech conventional weapons will be needed to insure a decisive U.S. victory. Also needed, in the President's view, are some high-profile systems, like the B-2 bomber and "Star Wars," that confirm America's status as the sole global superpower. By sacrificing useless nuclear weapons, Bush hopes to gain Congressional support for other major military programs.

The elimination of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and on the high seas will, as Bush asserts, make the world a much safer place. For this long overdue move, he is to be applauded. But we must be wary of those aspects of the President's plan (especially the implied intention to scrap the A.B.M. treaty of 1972) that imperil rather than safeguard the nation's long-term security. And we must keep pushing for deep cuts in other nuclear weapons systems, including those not mentioned in the President's speech, as well as costly conventional weapons.

# Widening *Rust*

After a relatively placid summer the National Endowment for the Arts is again under attack by pro- and anti-censorship forces. In mid-September a coalition of artists and civil rights groups, including the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Center for Constitutional Rights, distributed a file of N.E.A. documents apparently showing that the N.E.A. used political standards in rejecting grants to four performance artists last year. The so-called N.E.A. 4 (Karen Finley, Holly Hughes, Tim Miller and John Fleck) are pressing a lawsuit challenging the grant denials.

On September 19, Senator Jesse Helms won passage of an amendment to prohibit funding of "patently offensive" work that depicts sexual or excretory subjects. The vote was part of Senate action on the N.E.A.'s $174 million 1992 appropriation.

Helms's 68-to-28 margin was facilitated by the surrender of many senators who had stood by the N.E.A. in last year's attempt by Helms to prohibit grants for "obscene" artworks. A crucial defector was Senator Nancy Kassebaum, who offered her own amendment to cut the N.E.A.'s budget by 10 percent. Although Kassebaum's rider was defeated, her defection and Helms's victory margin mean fresh trouble for the N.E.A. A House-Senate conference committee may be leaning toward accepting the chilling Helms language.

A day after the Senate vote, a fresh blowup developed over the N.E.A.'s call for the return of $1,400 from Movement Research Inc., a New York City arts organization that had published a journal that included a full-page quasi-advertisement dominated by a photograph of a vagina headlined, "Read My Lips Before They're Sealed." The copy urged readers to call New York Senators Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Alfonse D'Amato to urge them to vote for repeal of the gag rule on abortion counseling upheld in *Rust v. Sullivan*. The N.E.A. claimed that the so-called ad was improper lobbying. Movement Research has refused to return the money.

Actually, the *Rust* decision could raise a more direct threat to artistic expression. Circumstantial evidence shows that the Bush Administration would like to expand the ruling to apply to other forms of expression. The first indication of this plan came eight days after the Supreme Court's May 23 decision, when a Justice Department lawyer told a San Francisco appeals court that *Rust* should control the case of a film exporter challenging U.S. Information Agency rules requiring that films seeking export certification as educational materials meet ideological-content standards.

Over the summer, arts lawyers tried to pre-empt the Justice Department by circulating a white paper arguing that *Rust* was written too narrowly to lend itself to broader application. Then in late July, Washington arts lawyer James Fitzpatrick told a Senate subcommittee that indirect evidence had begun to accumulate pointing toward such an application.

Then came the direct evidence. In little-noticed July 30 testimony before the same Senate subcommittee, Leslie Southwick, a deputy assistant attorney general, argued that *Rust* could apply directly to N.E.A. grants. Southwick asserted that the N.E.A. could refuse to support "a play that advocated anti-Semitism" and other specific works and said *Rust* "merely recognizes that when the government sponsors speech for certain purposes, it has the right to regulate the content of the government-funded portion of the message."

Among other things, *Rust* could be used as a way to defend the constitutionality of Helms's amendment should it survive. The Supreme Court held that the government could restrict the subjects that recipients of federal funds may discuss because "the government has not discriminated on the basis of viewpoint; it has merely chosen to fund one activity to the exclusion of another."

The N.E.A. explosions of mid-September and the backstage maneuvering over *Rust* are ominous signals that debates on government support of the arts will be testing the waters for wider-ranging government controls on thought and life styles.

ALLAN PARACHINI

*Allan Parachini covered the National Endowment for the Arts for the* Los Angeles Times. *He is now director of research and public affairs for the A.C.L.U. of Southern California.*

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# Perilous Entropy

One likely casualty of the Soviet Union's collapse is human rights protection. Although the U.S.S.R. was hardly a staunch defender of liberties, its record in two areas was not bad: prison reform and protection of minorities against xenophobic nationalism. Both are now in jeopardy.

Prior to Gorbachev, the lid on ethnic and national conflicts was kept fairly tightly shut. But when the Communist lid was lifted, hostilities—some centuries old, some a result of Communist imperialism—erupted. Lithuanians are taking away Poles' and Russians' rights to self-government by abolishing their local councils; Muslim Azerbaijanis have been going after Christian Armenians in Azerbaijan for some years now, as the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan tries to break away to join Armenia. In Georgia there has been persecution of the Ossetian minority, who are Adzhar Muslims, and of the political opposition, with Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia claiming almost absolute power. Russian and other minorities in Romanian-dominated Moldavia fear repression and absorption into Romania. And throughout the former Soviet empire, the many Russians living in the Baltic States and the non-Russian republics, such as the Ukraine, Moldavia, Kazakhstan and elsewhere, many of whom have privileges and high-level jobs denied the local population, are fearful of vengeance.

If the central government had power and authority, it could try to impose restraint, although the persistent bloodshed in the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict shows how futile such efforts could be. But that authority is now dead. There will probably be no All-Union Bill of Rights and no Constitutional Court or other system to enforce it.

The potential for broader strife from these ethnic conflicts, not only within the republics but also between them and with other countries, is also high. Polish President Lech Walesa has already expressed his displeasure with Lithuania's treatment of its Polish minority—some 300,000 people—by snubbing the Lithuanian President when he passed through Poland on his way to the United States. And will the giant Russian Republic passively sit by if Russians appear to be mistreated in the Ukraine, the Baltics or Moldavia?

The only thing likely to restrain some of this violence is the impoverished republics' desire for Western aid. Some observers believe Jews in such places as the Ukraine, where they are numerous and where anti-Semitism was once intense and widespread, currently face no dangers because local governments know that mistreatment would jeopardize aid. Unless there is similar pressure in behalf of other minorities, the future is bleak for them.

Another probable source of human rights violations is Soviet prisons, of which there are more than a thousand. A Helsinki Watch investigation of the Soviet prison system in June that included visits by federal appeals court Judge Abner Mikva, Robert Kushen of Helsinki Watch, and myself to twenty-one prisons, jails, police lockups and other detention facilities in different parts of the Soviet Union found that major improvements have been made. Much of the brutality Solzhenitsyn documented is gone, and conditions in some of the labor colonies seemed tolerable.

Nevertheless, serious problems remain and the Helsinki Watch report, issued on a preliminary basis in Moscow in early September at a Helsinki Accord meeting, made numerous recommendations for reform. Many of these have been incorporated into proposals prepared by the chief of the Soviet prison system, who had called for its complete overhaul, including many necessary changes in the criminal justice system, where much of the trouble lies.

Those reform plans are now doomed. The All-Union treaty would have given the central government the authority to implement reform throughout the Soviet Union. It is inconceivable that the newly independent republics, which for now at least will accept nothing more than some loose economic cooperation, would surrender control over any part of their criminal justice system. Few things are more sensitive than a criminal justice system; a repressive regime uses it to keep its rebellious subjects in line, and through it a free society struggles to balance justice and mercy with the need for order.

Western pressure is of little help here. Although the Council of Europe and the United Nations have insisted on minimum standards for prisons, these have been widely ignored, and little has been done to enforce them.

The collapse of the Soviet empire is not an unmixed blessing, and only Western vigilance can minimize some of its price.

HERMAN SCHWARTZ

*Herman Schwartz, professor of constitutional law at The American University, is chair of the Prisons Advisory Committee for the Human Rights Watch committees.*

★

## On The President's Nuclear Initiative

*A start! And maybe, by and by,*
*A pact that all can ratify*
*Will make an end. We'll say goodbye*
*To bombs of mass destruction. Try*
*Imagining how blue the sky*
*When there's a way to verify—*
*Some technilectracratic spy—*
*That they're all gone. Not one can fly.*
*We'll hear a universal sigh.*
*A tear will drop from every eye.*
*With no more missile-heads to buy,*
*We'll concentrate on S.D.I.*

*Calvin Trillin*

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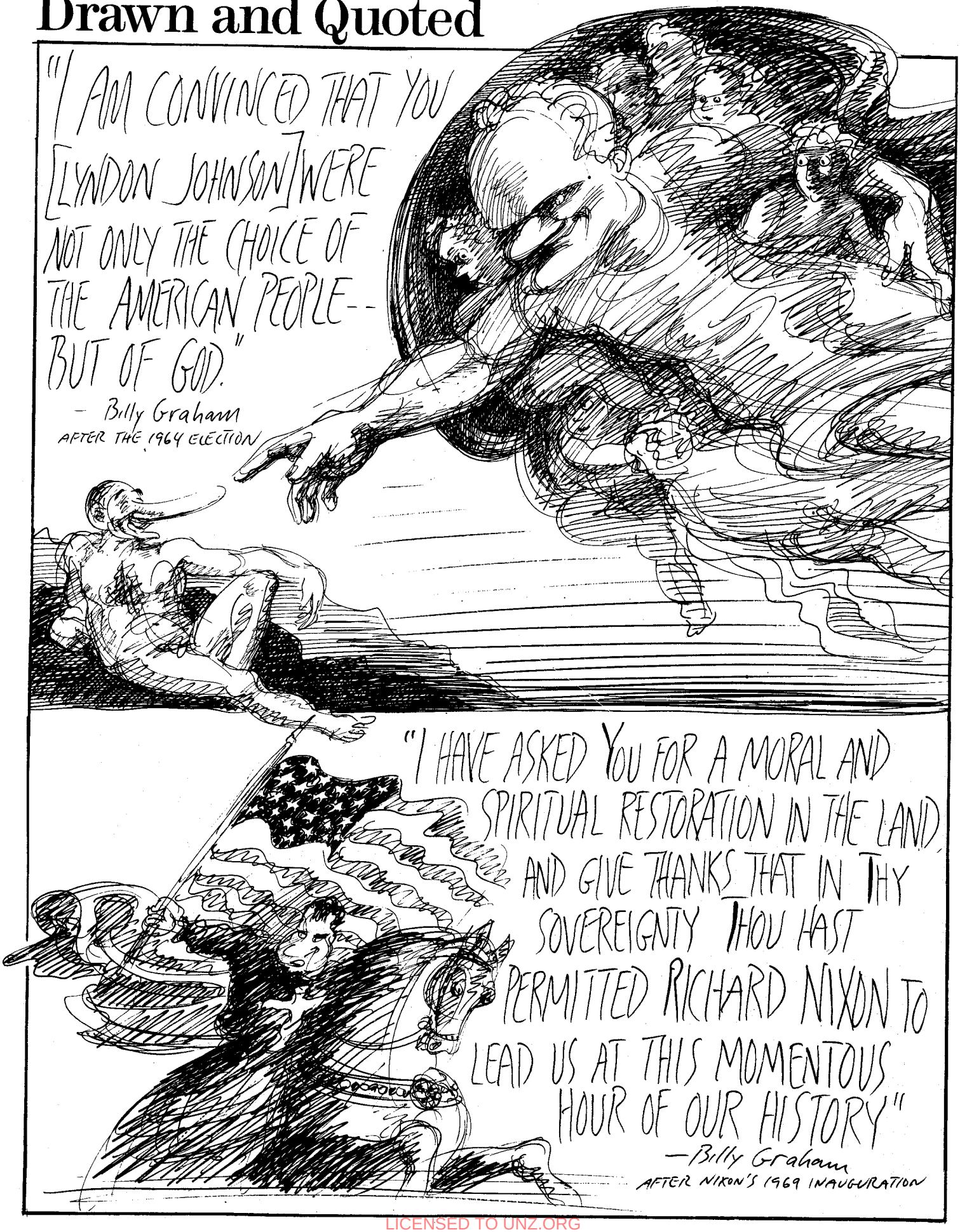
"I AM CONVINCED THAT YOU [LYNDON JOHNSON] WERE NOT ONLY THE CHOICE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE--BUT OF GOD."
— Billy Graham
AFTER THE 1964 ELECTION
"I HAVE ASKED YOU FOR A MORAL AND SPIRITUAL RESTORATION IN THE LAND, AND GIVE THANKS THAT IN THY SOVEREIGNTY THOU HAST PERMITTED RICHARD NIXON TO LEAD US AT THIS MOMENTOUS HOUR OF OUR HISTORY"
—Billy Graham
AFTER NIXON'S 1969 INAUGURATION

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EDWARD SOREL

"O GOD, OUR NEW PRESIDENT NEEDS THEE AS FEW MEN EVER NEEDED THEE. ... WE PRAY THAT THOU WILT SO GUIDE GERALD FORD IN HANDLING THE AFFAIRS OF STATE THAT THE WORLD WILL MARVEL."
—BILLY GRAHAM (1974)
"I'VE KNOWN HIM* SINCE HE WAS GOVERNOR, YOU KNOW. WE'RE OLD FRIENDS."
—Billy Graham (1979)
*JIMMY CARTER
"GEORGE BUSH HAS THE HIGHEST MORAL STANDARDS OF ALMOST ANYONE I KNOW... [BUSH] IS THE BEST FRIEND I HAVE IN THE WHOLE WORLD, OUTSIDE MY IMMEDIATE STAFF."
—Billy Graham (1991)

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# MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Of what exhausting phenomenon are the following everyday terms an illustration? "Bipartisan"; "partisan"; "divisive"; "healing"; "we look forward to working more closely"; "I would need to see the full text of those remarks"; "the business community"; "the intelligence community"; "put this behind us"; "move the country forward"; "define our agenda"; "address our concerns"; "appropriate conduct"; "inappropriate conduct"; "I cannot recall at this moment in time"; "thank you for not smoking"; "the American people."

These and many other routine fatuities represent the language of political correctness in our day, the prefabricated and conditioned phraseology by which "we" (it's always "we" in regular P.C. talk) express and imbibe the politics of the permissible. I had hoped to avoid writing about this room-temperature, pseudo-intellectual fad, but I realize that it's a fate not to be evaded. Just as those who call for "English Only" believe themselves to be speaking English when they are mouthing a mediocre patois, and just as those who yell for "Western civilization" cannot tell Athens, Georgia, from Erasmus Darwin, so those who snicker at the latest "P.C." gag are generally willing slaves to the most half-baked jargon.

Obviously it's tiresome when some loud child who missed the sixties presumes to instruct us all about "people of color" or "persons of gender." Still, at least there's an element of self-satire in the business; even in the hopeless phrase "politically correct." But when every newscaster in the country uses the knee-jerk term "peace process," or discourses about "credibility," or describes some blood-soaked impostor as "a moderate," the deadening of language has gone so far that it's almost impossible to ironize. Yet this occurs every day, and it's accounted a wonder if the President himself can marshal the clichés in the correct order on his wooden tongue.

A person intoxicated by political correctitude might say of capital punishment that it is racist, repressive, fascistic and reminiscent of the worst excesses of the Portuguese Inquisition (or whatever). He or she might even say it was sexist and homophobic—even though it doesn't seem to fall that much upon women and even though the contrived word "homophobia," as we classicists know, means "fear of the same," if indeed it means anything at all, which I take leave to doubt. However, all these positions would be preferable in their way to that of Clarence Thomas, who was asked, in a hearing of the world's greatest deliberative body, what he thought of the death penalty and replied that "philosophically" he foresaw no problem in applying it in "appropriate" situations. What could be more bipartisan than the use of the word "philosophical" to mean "no problem"? The beauty of consensus P.C. is that it makes differences on matters of principle almost unsayable. A bit of a blow, however, had perhaps been dealt to the Platonic foundations of our great Western Civ.

In the nondebate over nonissues that goes on here, the hands-down winner is the culture of euphemism. Witnesses before Congress are actually awarded points for their expensively coached lying and emollience. Meanwhile, self-defined radicals sell the pass by announcing that anything is better than being "offensive." The two rivulets of drool merge softly and imperceptibly, and we end up with a public language by which almost nobody employs plain speech. One is almost rejoiced to hear a stupid, meaningless, barbarous emphasis—"Fuck this shit" springs to mind—merely for the sake of its unadorned clarity.

The disquieting thing about newscaster-babble or editorial-speak is its ready availability as a serf idiom, a vernacular of deference. "Mr. Secretary, are *we* any nearer to bringing about a *dialogue* in this *process*?" Here is the politically correct language of the consensus, which can be spoken while asleep or under hypnosis by any freshly trained microphone-holder. At least the P.C. felons are not trying, or not all the time, to "bring us together" and make believe we are all one family. However, the trend of their emaciated terminology leads in the direction of a mini-consensus that does not welcome dissent. The fact that this consensus is mostly a laugh doesn't make it, as an effort, any less potentially sinister. Morally, it may pose as a compliment to pluralism and "diversity," which makes it feel superior to its white-bread senior partner. But politically and socially, it translates as "watch what you say and don't give offense to anybody," which isn't a serious definition of diversity.

Senator Tom Harkin's kickoff campaign rally, I was interested to see, began with a mass open-air recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, "under God" and all, and a grand display of American flags. By these means Harkin hoped to show that Bush couldn't scare him! And yet what was this but a humiliating enactment of the mantras and gestures of official political correctness? A man who is still twitching from lashes inflicted more than three years ago is not a proud man, or an emancipated one. He is hoping, hypocritically, to stay within the admissible bounds of the politically safe (hypocrisy is not the least of the psychic wounds that result from enforced consensus) and to pass for white rather than as a possible friend of Willie Horton. What a country, and what a culture, when the liberals cry before they are hurt, and the reactionaries pose as the brave nonconformists, while the radicals make a fetish of their own jokey irrelevance.

It is not enough to "have" free speech. People must learn to speak freely. Noam Chomsky remarked in the sixties about short-life ultraradicals on campus who thought that Marx should have been burning down the British Museum rather than writing and thinking in it. The less political descendants of that faction have now tried to reduce life to a system of empowerment etiquette, and have wasted a lot of their own time and everyone else's in the process. But the real bridle on our tongues is imposed by everyday lying and jargon, sanctioned and promulgated at the highest levels of media and politics, and not by the awkward handful who imagine themselves revolutionaries.

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# ARTICLES.

WATER FIGHTS

# The Damming of Native Lands

STEVE TURNER AND TODD NACHOWITZ

In far northern Quebec, near James Bay, a vast series of hydroelectric reservoirs, larger cumulatively than Connecticut and Rhode Island together, spread deadeningly across the minimalist taiga landscape of stunted larch and fir, bare rock and muskeg swamp. The inundated lands, which mark the first stage in the province's enormous hydroelectric development scheme (the full plan would flood almost twice that area), are in the hunting and trapping territories of the James Bay Cree Indians and their neighbors, the Naskapi Indians and the Eastern Inuit. On a headland above the main reservoir, a small cenotaph reads:

> This monument is erected in memory of our Cree Ancestors, who, having lived off this land for thousands of years, now rest under the waters of the reservoirs of the La Grande Complexe.
> I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.
>
> Job 19:25

The poignancy is overwhelming. But in the sweeping silence of the scene, the bitter edge of a global conflict cuts through: aboriginal peoples defending their lands, the ecology of those lands and the ways of life tied to those ecologies, against the accelerating worldwide onslaught of dam building. On every hemisphere the world's last autochthonous cultures are being threatened by the industrial world's demand for water resources. In a perverse international twist on Jimmy Carter's infamous idea, zones of sacrifice for energy production are being created mostly in the territories of aboriginal nations. And many of them are submerged.

But the issue is not just the brutality and pathos of these updated Indian wars. The growing indigenous resistance also sends a dramatic warning that ecologically acceptable possibilities for the development of global freshwater resources are rapidly shrinking. More than 10 percent of the world's stream flow is already captured in reservoirs, while arguably 60 percent or more of the annual runoff of rain and snowfall is interrupted by dams somewhere on its way to the sea. The urbanizing quest for water and water power now extends its grasp to the peoples of the true hinterlands—the far north, the deep Amazonian forest, the self-sustaining farm valleys of our earliest agricultural societies.

Working against terrible odds, ancient peoples are creatively blending their traditional forms of self-defense with thoroughly modern techniques. The Crees and Inuit, facing the proposed James Bay Phase II diversion and damming of the Great Whale/Little Whale river system (the Naskapi would not be affected), have gone to court, forcing a confrontation between Quebec and Canada's federal government; appealed to the United Nations; and made alliances with national and international environmental action organizations. That last step has lately produced important gains. In Quebec, where taxpayers bear the cost of hydroelectric financing, the proposed Great Whale development has been justified on the basis of projected sales of electricity to New York and New England. Utilities serving the New York metropolitan area would constitute the largest concentrated export market for James Bay power. But activists have won a postponement of lucrative contracts between the New York Power Authority and Hydro-Quebec, giving possibly a year's maneuvering room in which to strengthen opposition to the project.

*Of dams fifty meters high or higher, the truly big ones, seventy are under construction.*

Coalitions like the one responsible for this delay have sprouted under very particular conditions—the seeds of aboriginal activism germinating in the soil of an environmental defense movement ready at last to value the experience and the leadership of native peoples who best understand the ecologically crucial lands on which they live.* The impetus for this alliance lay in the native groups' adaptation of First World techniques of direct action and public relations that made them visible, in today's terms, beyond their own boundaries: videos, concerts, lobbying, appeals to corporate social responsibility and dramatic, sometimes aggressive displays of traditional culture.

For the Crees and Inuit this has meant, among other things, paddling their specially made odiak—half canoe, half kayak—down the Hudson River to New York City, stopping along the way to lecture, sing and give hunting calls at local schools and meetings. Across Amazonia, Kayapó Indians have ridden weary hours by bus, wearing body paint and feather headdresses, bringing traditional weapons—along with display maps and a video camera—to demonstrate in Brazil's urban streets against the damming of the Xingu, their homeland tributary of the Amazon. Elsewhere, the Nahuatl of Mexico, the Peigan Indians of Alberta, Canada, and tribal peoples of India are among the many native groups involved in innovative and militant protest.

*Steve Turner has reported on the situation of the Crees, the Inuit and the Kayapó in various publications. Todd Nachowitz, a doctoral candidate in anthropology at Syracuse University, is on the board of the Arctic to Amazonia Alliance.*

* Among the small groups involved in this work, which readers may want to assist with their time or funds, are the James Bay and Northern Wilderness Task Force (c/o Solidarity Foundation, 310 West 52nd Street, New York, NY 10019), the Arctic to Amazonia Alliance (Box 73, Strafford, VT 05072) and the Amazon Network (3941 Fairfax Square, Fairfax, VA 22031).

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There is considerable bravery involved in this resistance, because governments tend to be especially repressive against protesting aboriginals. But beyond that, a historically rooted sense of dignity comes into play, blended with an ironic sense of humor. Traditional peoples from Norway (the Lapps, properly called the Same) to Amazonia knowingly tap into unquenchable First World fantasies about noble savages and the frontier. But the natives' calls for support also aim deeper down: In this atomized age, invocations of timeless cultural traditions and aboriginal pride bluntly challenge the urbanite, Who are you? What do you and your people stand for?

"Your power shortage is not our problem," says Cree Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. But the truly primitive state of energy planning in the industrial world, the bottomless maw of consumption lurking in the development dreams of emerging nations and the political influence of the burgeoning dam-building industry—involving major national and international engineering and construction corporations—combine to make it so. Brownouts and power failures may be a *divertissement* for tourists, but when they become endemic, as in Rio de Janeiro, the premier city in a nation gobbling its resources even faster than did the industrializing United States, the pressure for the seemingly cheap, clean energy of harnessed rivers becomes intense.

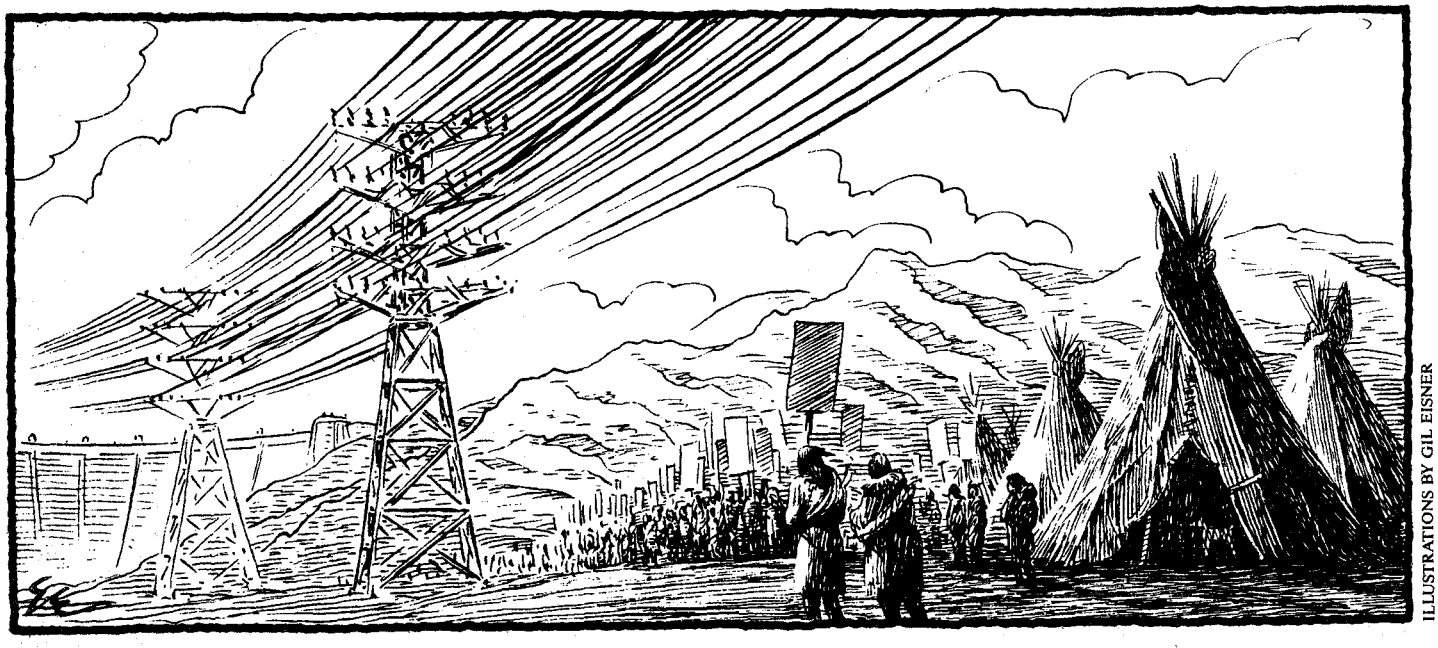
As in Quebec, native-led coalitions have won important postponements. But total victories are few: Like vampires, dam projects seem always to rise again, even after they've apparently been staked through the heart. And new projects keep coming. According to the best estimates, some 300 dams more than fifteen meters high (the low threshold for large dams) are completed every year. Of dams fifty meters high or higher, the truly big ones, seventy are under construction and about eighty-five are planned.

The World Bank, the largest single international funding source for dam projects, has its financial hand behind some 25 percent of those biggest dams. Multilateral development banks support perhaps a quarter more. Even the smallest projects pit the people affected against some of the most powerful funding institutions in the world at least 10 percent of the time.

On the hydroelectric front (along with irrigation the most common justification for dams; flood control is the other), indigenous resistance to inundation translates politically into a demand for conservation. That doesn't mean just turning off unnecessary lightbulbs. It involves industrial production of more efficient electric motors and refrigeration, insulation of buildings and heating/cooling systems, introduction of voltage-saving home products such as compact fluorescent lighting, and more.

Full-scale conservation also calls for small-scale generating plants versus multi-gigawatt powerhouses. Hydroelectric energy has long been billed as clean and renewable, and there is an undeniable free-lunch appeal in the fact that a series of dams such as those already in place as part of Hydro-Quebec can turn out, at peak production, as much current as ten big and dangerous nuclear or fossil-fuel plants. But the "free" lunch actually feeds billions of dollars to a dam-building industry spurred on by engineers riding the crest of "big fix" technology, and by sleazy money mongers among the elites of developing countries who can arrange to have dams built even when—as with Brazil's Balbina—they are certain to become energy-production failures as well as ecological disasters.

The truly clean form of hydroelectric output lies in taking power from "run of the river" generators that do not block stream flow. Water impounded in reservoirs does more than flood productive and sensitive lands; by pressing down heavily on those lands, it can create seismic hazards. And slowed in its passage, it stagnates, breeds algae and interacts with submerged vegetation and soils to produce toxins that infect the food chain (methylated mercury coming from the rot of uncut trees in the James Bay reservoirs has forced the removal of several species of fish, formerly staple sources of protein, from native diets). Subsurface decomposition of plants also releases copious amounts of greenhouse gases. And slowed river flow drops silt that eventually turns dams into permanent tottering waterfalls: The muddier the river, the sooner the dam is



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disabled. One dam in China silted up even before it went on line. Dams equally badly conceived in Brazil, India and other places with high-erosion topographies may last a mere twenty to thirty years, with steadily dwindling productivity. All the while, acidification and algal growth corrode and foul both dams and turbines, and then proceed downstream—amplified in their effect by interrupted flows—to damage fisheries, crucial estuaries and deltas. The trapping of formerly ocean-bound sediment by the Aswan High Dam in Egypt, for instance, is allowing the Mediterranean Sea to reclaim up to 200 meters per year of the Nile Delta. The same process on the Mississippi River is gradually putting Louisiana delta land under salt water.

Such perils hold true whether the dam is built for electricity or to yield irrigation or both. Alberta's rechanneling of the Oldman River for irrigation to wealthy downstream farms, a project that has become the bane of the Peigan Indians, adds a third dimension: the possible future diversion of water to the thirsty nearby United States. (Quebec's Premier, Robert Bourassa, has proposed an even larger diversion from James Bay to the United States.)

"It's dying time," said Milton Born With A Tooth. "Up until an hour ago we were surrounded by R.C.M.P. [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], and they were *ready*. I can't begin to describe the tension around here."

It was last May, and Born With A Tooth, founder of the Peigans' Lonefighter Society, was describing the escalating conflict over the fate of the Oldman River, a profound presence in the Peigan culture. The situation had long since got rough. The Lonefighters had tried to bulldoze a cut from Alberta's newly dug channel to the stream's historic course through their reservation. The Mounties had invaded the reservation, overriding the Indians' assumed sovereignty. Born With A Tooth fired warning shots and was jailed.

The Peigans established an encampment downstream from the dam "so that they'll know we're there, that we're not going away." The encampment featured tepees and other fixtures of traditional Peigan life. "Except the clothing," said Born With A Tooth. "We didn't want people looking at us the way they look at *Dances With Wolves*."

But the Lonefighters also set up a National Communications Network, complete with fax. And they outmaneuvered the R.C.M.P., who had pitched an armed camp to keep the Peigans off sections of the reservation that Alberta had claimed for the project. The Peigans' peaceable march onto the dam site, accompanied by a witness force of church leaders and representatives of other Indian nations, thwarted the Mounties' preparations for violence. This past July the Peigans mobilized a cross-country caravan that drove from British Columbia eastward, picking up native peoples along the way to a major gathering of the Mohawk nation in Quebec, and thence to Cree territory by James Bay.

Those protests recall similar actions in India, the world champion when it comes to building dams. The Narmada Valley Development Project alone envisions 3,000 small dams, 135 medium-sized dams and 30 major dams, which collectively would force the relocation of more than a million people

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from the choicest lands along a major river that cuts the Deccan Plateau westward to the Arabian Sea. The World Bank's support for the largest of these dams has continued despite the failure of relocation plans and the massive popular resistance to being moved.

Dam building in India has a bloody history. In 1978, in the state of Bihar, tribal Santal people and neighboring Bihari villagers set up roadblocks and occupied government offices to bar development of the Surbarnarekha River irrigation dams, which would have flooded their territory. The official response was violent: eight demonstrators killed. Four years later a leader was murdered. Satinath Sarangi, an environmental activist, recounts a subsequent confrontation between Santals and Bihar's Minister for Irrigation. "The minister came with a lot of armed people, and the women took their little children, 6 months old, 8 months old, and put them in the minister's car. And the children cried and piddled and did all that, and the minister said, 'What are you doing?' And they said, 'Since the children are going to die anyway, we're giving them to you.' "

Tribal resistance along the Surbarnarekha eventually caused a postponement of World Bank funding for the second stage of the irrigation project. But that lull is in question. The moneys, though on temporary hold, are "in the pipeline again," says Lori Udall of the Environmental Defense Fund (E.D.F.), and Santal activists are calling for help to counter the next onslaught.

In the Narmada Valley, meanwhile, according to Sarangi, the tribal Gonds, Korkus, Bhils and Bhilalas are also having difficulty blocking the big dams that would inundate their forests and their farmlands. Local resistance, supported internationally by the E.D.F. and others, recently won an unprecedented agreement by the World Bank to hire independent investigators to evaluate the impact of one of the biggest dams, Sardar Sarovar, in terms of population displacement and environmental destruction. But there are many battles ahead.

The Narmada peoples are ready, says Sarangi. Despite the problems of organizing a largely illiterate, dispersed, mostly pre-electricity population into a coherent resistance, imaginative activists have achieved both intertribal unity and cooperation with their nontribal neighbors. An exhortatory videotape, produced out of pocket, has traveled from village to village on a jeep equipped with a generator. There are posters and street theater. There are marches, several of which have been tens of thousands strong, meeting sometimes brutal repression. And there is singing. One song, which could translate geographically for the Crees, the Kayapós and others, says, "They generate electricity here, and in Delhi it makes the night seem like day."

In the Mexican state of Guerrero the Nahuatl Indians have fought a dam proposed on their Balsas River. At a site near San Juan Tetelcingo, the dam would flood Nahuatl territory and potentially valuable archeological sites to help keep the existing downstream Caracol power dam from silting up. But the Nahuatl—who have attracted support from opposition political parties and from the prestigious Grupo de lo Cien, composed of Octavio Paz and other world-renowned writers and artists—thus far have staved off the Mexican energy planners. They set up blockades for leafleting of the main road from Mexico City to Acapulco (until the state police came in riot gear). They surprised President Carlos Salinas de Gortari at a state reception with a petition against the dam. They added their presence and their cause to an opposition coalition's occupation at the state capitol and participated in a hunger strike aimed at general environmental reform.

And like the Narmada peoples in India, the Nahuatl formed an umbrella organization to represent village committees—a style of up-from-the-roots mobilization that characterizes indigenous antidam movements. The Kayapó Indians, for instance, confronted with Brazil's plans for two big dams on the Xingu River, organized a unique pan-tribal protest assembly in Altamira that brought together other Xingu-area peoples formerly hostile to one another (and attracted local dam-backers, who fired warning shots over the encampment from pickup trucks). The event also drew delegations from native peoples and ecological protection groups from Brazil and around the world.

By the time of this assembly the Kayapós had attended academic conferences in the United States, lobbied in Washington to block the World Bank's proposed funding of the dams and generated enthusiastic support from Canada to Europe. Sensational press coverage worldwide—featuring a Kayapó woman pressing her machete blade against the head of an official of Eletronorte, Brazil's regional power utility—eclipsed the groundbreaking nature of Altamira, but the assembly, together with earlier actions, was instrumental in getting the World Bank to cancel its loan, sending the project into limbo.

Keeping it there, however, along with other temporarily blocked dams around the world, will require escalating political pressure. Indigenous groups, increasingly connecting with one another, are rising to the challenge; simultaneously First World activists are taking greater note of the relationship between indigenous struggles and their own work.

"Damn the dam," says Sappa Fleming, Inuit Mayor of Kuutjuaraapik. "Damn the dam," echoes Satinath Sarangi. And other echoes come in from all over as activists from the earth's first nations take to the road to protect their lands. The Kayapós have sent a delegation to Canada to discuss with the Crees and Inuit the best ways to block dams, and they expect to send another. Meanwhile, the Crees and Inuit plan a major

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fall concert in New York City. Over the summer, Narmada Valley activists were in Europe drumming up support.

The natives' campaign is reaching out to us all. In Quebec, as also in New York and New England, organizers are recruiting funds and volunteers for ongoing legal and public-awareness actions. And a "silent protest" has begun: Every Monday night, from 8:50 to 9 P.M., supporters of the Crees and Inuit are being asked to turn out their lights as an act of personal consciousness.

Ten minutes isn't much. But it's enough time to think about who's paying when we turn on the switch. □

IN ITALY RED IS DEAD

# Communism alla Bolognese

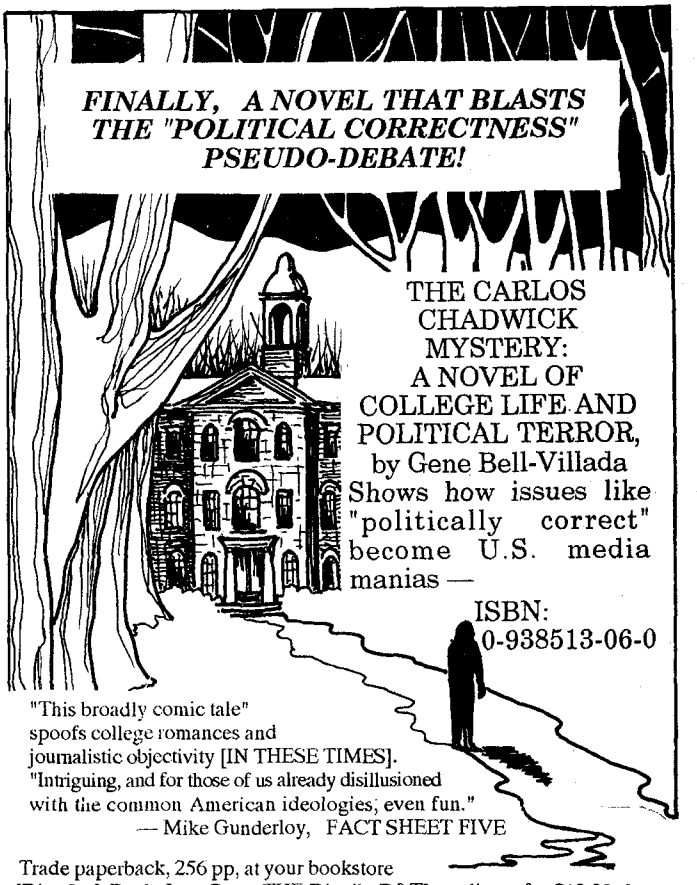
ANDREW KOPKIND

*Bologna, Italy*

The Festa dell'Unita, a three-week national fair run at the end of every summer by the late Italian Communist Party (P.C.I.), used to end in a mass rally with fiery speeches by party leaders, torches burning, red flags flying and hundreds of thousands of fists raised and voices crooning "Bandiera Rossa" ("Red Flag"). In those heydays, the party controlled scores of city and regional councils, commanded the allegiance of millions of workers and represented the major parliamentary opposition to the ruling Christian Democrats (D.C.). But that was then; now the party has changed its name and its program, its hold on local politics is loosening, the favor of many workers and voters has been lost and it constitutes a barely credible opposition. Accordingly, the closing speeches at its Festa were bland, the torches guttering, the flags stilled, the fists limp and the voices *piano.* More than one speaker at the various panels and forums at the Festa argued bravely that out of the collapse of Communism has come a new beginning. But the atmosphere suggested the opposite: *finita la commedia.*

Last winter in a wrenching national convention, the P.C.I. became the P.D.S., the Democratic Party of the Left (it had to avoid the initials P.S.D., which belong to a despised faction of right-wing social democrats). It adopted a new symbol—a stylized tree—and relegated the old P.C.I. hammer-and-sickle circle to the bottom of the trunk, like a discarded baking-soda box [see Alexander Stille, "*Opera Buffa*," November 5, 1990]. Perhaps the most trenchant comment on the change came in the leftist daily newspaper *Il Manifesto*, where an editorial cartoonist drew a dog with one hind leg raised, tail wagging, panting excitedly, "A tree!"

With somewhat less trauma, the party fashioned a new program that removed all vestiges of Marxism and most of democratic socialism, opting instead for a kind of Euroliberalism that dares not push the status quo to the left. Most of the old P.C.I. members joined the new party, although a faction soon formed around those stalwarts who had argued "No." But a few independent-minded Communists who had been in and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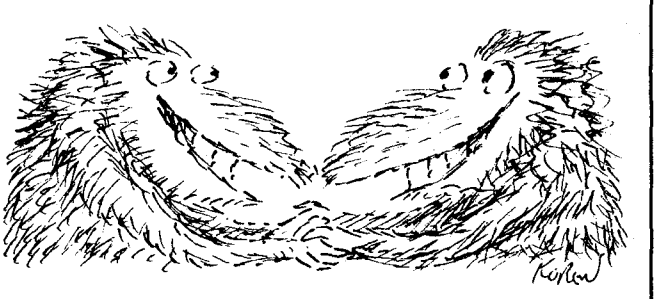

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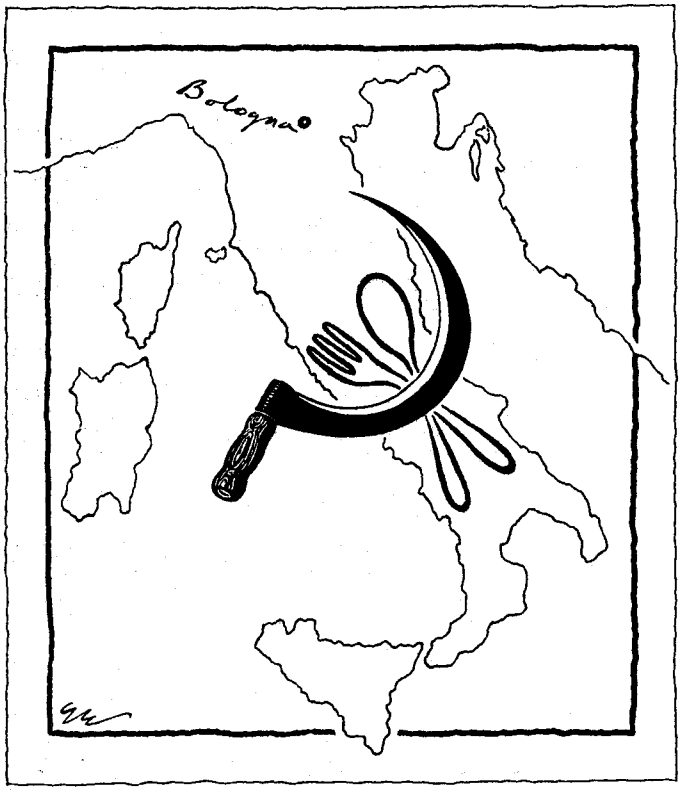
out and in the party over the past several decades dropped out again and formed a pre-party party called "Communist Reconstruction." How much support any of these and other leftists can muster in the country will come clear next May, when national elections are supposed to be held.

The rightward drift has been blowing in the wind. For years the Communists tried to outdo their conservative rivals as the party of law and order, ever faithful to the West. For the most part, the P.C.I. endorsed NATO's militarism and anti-Sovietism and, especially after 1978, when the Red Brigades kidnapped former Christian Democratic premier Aldo Moro, the party backed the most repressive antiradical measures. During the 1970s, P.C.I. officials and their union comrades spent most of their efforts destroying independent workers' uprisings and organizations in an unexamined repeat of Lenin's put-down of "left-wing communism." As much as anything, the "line" of those past two decades, which celebrated stability and looked to the day when the P.C.I. might finally enter a government, destroyed the P.C.I.'s radical project. And for all its begging, the party never got the recognition it sought or a place at the D.C.'s table.

Meanwhile, the old P.C.I. managers and party functionaries in their central Italian strongholds go about their political and economic businesses as if nothing very much has changed, except their spots. Emilia-Romagna, the region where the Festa was held this year, is still thoroughly "communized" in the Italian fashion, which is not very revolutionary but singularly successful. It may indeed be the *only* example of successful "actually existing socialism" in the world, depending on one's definitions of course, but there's not much competition. Bologna, the regional capital, has had Communist-led governments since World War II (when Communist anti-Fascist partisans established their legitimacy and secured their power). It is a well-run, bustling place free from the corruption and at least some of the inefficiency that plague the Christian Democrat–controlled south.




What remains "Communist" about the city and region is somewhat unclear. Intriguing social experiments of years past, such as free public transportation and housing subsidies to artisans who live above their shops in the "historic center" of Bologna, have been cut back or abandoned in the face of budget crunches such as have affected similar programs elsewhere in Europe and the United States. But health, housing, education and economic development are all promoted more assiduously than in most nonsocialist milieus, and with arguably more popular participation. Cooperative organizations of farmers, workers and consumers, little known in the United States but a pillar of Italian Communism, are still quite viable. And at least the citizens are not massing in the piazzas and burning their copies of Gramsci, even as the overall economy sputters and the Western capitalist recession moves into the boot.

## *Political participation—which used to be the highest in the West—is plummeting.*

The fact is that the crisis in Italian Communism is happening at the same time as a crisis in Christian Democracy—and, for that matter, in social democracy. As usual, Italian society seems to be in the second act of an extremely complicated opera, with several plots running at once and a resolution hours away in Act IV or V. The Christian Democrats have ruled Italy since World War II, making it one of the most enduring parties in power in the world, now that the Soviet one is down the drain. Despite forty-odd shuffles of faces and portfolios, the D.C. government remains in the Quirinal as it has ever since the United States helped put it in power (and keep it there, against Communist pressure) at the beginning of the cold war.

But the European earthquake of the past two years has shaken the D.C.'s foundation. For one thing, it cannot rely on cold war fears to maintain its position as the only bulwark against Bolshevism in Italy. That bogyman has been buried. More than that, the idea of the one-party state, which characterizes the D.C.'s long reign in Italy, has come into disfavor.

Although the Communists have their political ghettos in Emilia-Romagna and a few other central and northern areas, the D.C. has made itself synonymous with the Italian state, just as the men in Moscow made the Communist Party there synonymous with the Soviet Union. Both parties have infiltrated the economic and social structure to such a degree that it would take a kind of revolution to dislodge them. A third of all major Italian corporations are state-owned or have substantial government investment, and they as well as private companies are run by directorates that interlock with D.C. organs. Local public works where the D.C. is in power (as in

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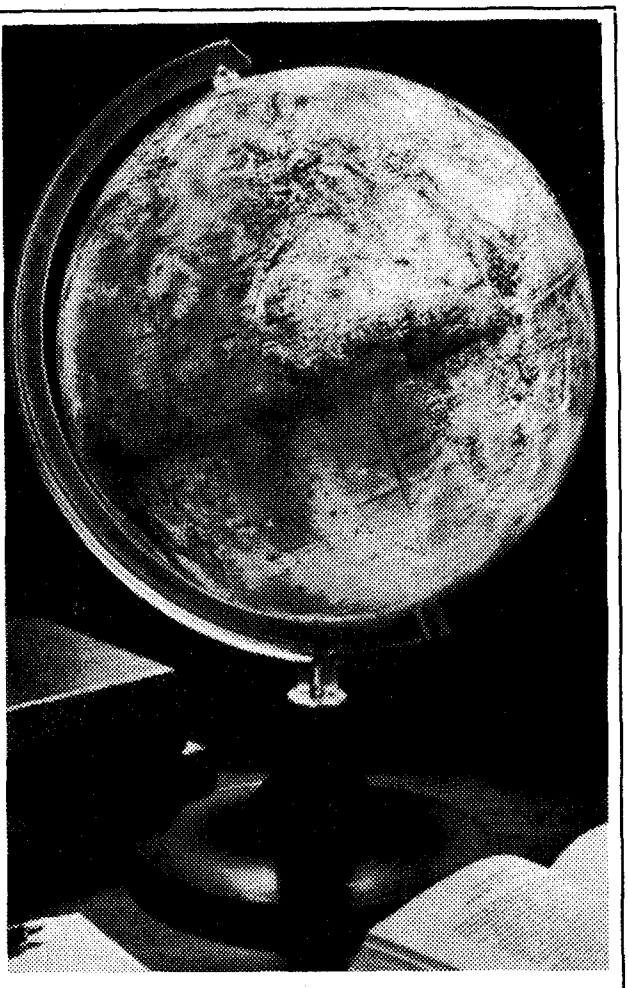

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Rome and throughout the south) are operated according to the D.C. agenda. The D.C. *nomenklatura* approaches the Soviet Communist Party's bureaucracy in influence and extent.

So while most non-Communists in Europe cheered the C.P.U.S.S.R.'s fall, the Christian Democrats shivered in self-concern. If the party-state could be overthrown in the East, the state-party could suffer a similar fate in Italy. In the resulting confusion, D.C. leaders and their comrades in the great Italian corporations have fallen to fighting among themselves and accusing one another. President Francesco Cossiga, for one, and Fiat's Gianni Agnelli, for another, issue dire warnings almost daily that Italy is about to go under, or at least go down, as Europe's boom baby. They and other critics within the D.C. system claim that the party has stifled reform and innovation, both politically and economically.

Meanwhile, Italians are enjoying the *dolce vita* they invented in the 1950s but couldn't really enjoy, en masse, until the 1980s, when consumptive spirits started soaring. The country seems to have been Cloroxed down to its original colors. Churches, monuments and public buildings are as white as the day their stones were quarried. The massive Trevi Fountain is squeaky clean, and the Michelangelo frescoes in the Sistine Chapel are brighter than MTV. People hardly notice the rats in the walls or the cracks in the windows. Perhaps they are so busy shopping that political participation—which used to be the highest in the West—is plummeting. Observers of the political process expect that voting percentages may soon fall as low as those in U.S. elections. For there suddenly seems to be not much of an alternative here. The P.D.S. asserts it can run things more efficiently and more cleanly than the D.C., but it studiously avoids all mention of reform in the area of social and economic relations, *naturalmente*. The Socialists, who have been in D.C. governments for twenty-five years, have no standing to claim an independent policy. There's some hope that the Socialists and the former Communists can get together in a united front of the left, as the two tendencies did in France in the early Mitterrand years. But optimism on that front quickly dissipates with even a casual glance in the direction of Paris.

Only the worst exhibit the passionate intensity formerly native to Italians of all stripes. A loose right-wing populist grouping called the "leagues" [see Daniel Singer, "Fiddling While Rome Smolders," July 29/August 5] has spread across Lombardy and the north, with appeals to the government to kick out immigrants (mainly African and Arab) and stop spending money to aid and comfort the poorer regions of the *Mezzogiorno*. Some "leaguers" look to separatist movements in neighboring Yugoslavia and have begun to demand nationhood for Lombardy, which is the richest region in Italy. The leagues' ideas were spread across the whole country this past summer when thousands of Albanian refugees arrived on the Adriatic coast. Almost everyone in Italy wanted them shipped home at once, although some accompanied their cries of "good riddance" with compassionate murmurs of regret. Unsurprisingly, many former Communist voters adhere to the leagues, and their defection will surely plague the P.D.S. down the road.

At a forum at the Festa in which I participated, an old red priest, Father Ernesto Balducci, animatedly shouted his defiance of the conventional wisdom about the death of socialism, the end of history and similar millennial predictions. "The fall of the Communist Party in Russia means that socialism can finally begin," he exclaimed. The audience cheered. Later, I walked among the exquisitely turned out crowds on the shopping streets of Bologna and traveled through lush farms and wineries on the way to Rome. I saw all the Lancias and Alfa-Romeos and the big new factory buildings on the outskirts of the cities. Every other man on the street carried a cellular telephone in his palm, the way Italian men used to carry those silly Borsalino purses in the 1970s. I had a meal in a trattoria I've known since the 1950s. Lunch—an extensive antipasto and a rich spaghetti alla carbonara—used to cost a couple of dollars. Now the bill came to $45, and *servizio* is no longer included. I wonder whether Father Balducci had the same spaghetti. □

IN VIDEO VERITAS?

# A Word From Your Friendly Drug Co.

STEVEN T. TAYLOR AND MORTON MINTZ

Suppose a reputable newspaper acted as a conduit for "news" articles about prescription drugs that were in fact puff pieces published as received from the manufacturers. Now suppose someone exposed the breach of trust, and television stations or magazines jumped on the story. Wouldn't there be hell to pay? But in the case of TV, unfortunately, this breach of trust is actually happening. Many local stations slip into their newscasts "news" segments about prescription drugs that are nothing more than canned promotions, called video news releases. These VNRs rarely warn viewers that unlike other consumer products, prescription drugs are potent agents that can cause nasty, even life-threatening, adverse reactions and are not always effective [see sidebar on page 482].

The VNRs, plucked free of charge from satellite feeds, are produced for most pharmaceutical manufacturers by public-relations outfits. The stars of the disguised commercials—usually white-coated, confidence-inspiring physicians who tout drugs knowingly and glowingly—are paid by the manufacturers.

As if this weren't abusive enough, some VNRs escalate the deception by including lead-ins and closings suggested by the P.R. firm. When these are spoken by newscasters, the effect is to trick viewers even more into assuming not only that they are hearing and seeing authentic news but that it is news produced by their admirably enterprising local station.

It gets worse. Some VNRs have blank audio and visual portions, which are designed to enable a station to compound the

*Steven T. Taylor is a Washington writer. Morton Mintz, a former* Washington Post *reporter, has written about the pharmaceutical industry and the F.D.A. for nearly thirty years.*

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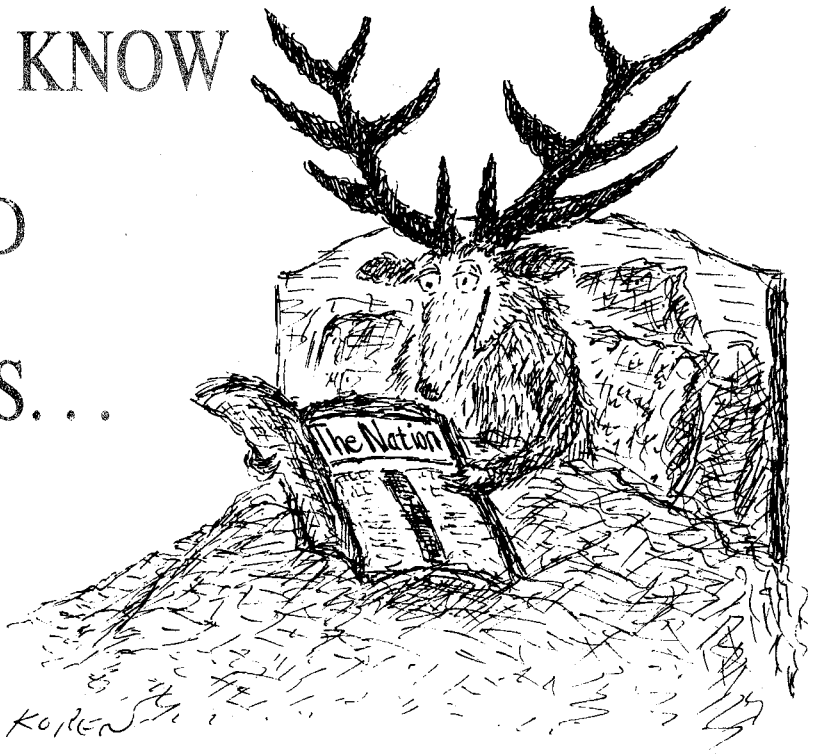


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con with phantom interviews. In these, viewers are led to believe that they hear and see a local anchor or reporter putting questions to the hired-hand doctor. It's an illusion: No conversation actually occurs. Instead, the "interviewer" fills in the blanks with questions planted and shaped by the P.R. firm to elicit and be in sync with the canned answers of the paid doctor. In turn, he or she is stage-managed to look to one side and nod just as in a real interview. Considerately, the P.R. firms supply extra footage, known as "B roll," that enables stations to work in a local angle.

The very least stations could do would be to signal viewers that drug companies are the sources of the VNRs, which would be no more difficult than tagging old videotapes "file footage." But no clues are given to the trusting, vulnerable, manipulated viewers. VNRs "send a controlled message," a CIBA-GEIGY representative said at a Food and Drug Law Institute conference in Washington in September 1990. "They allow us to make sure we can control the message as much as possible and not depend on a journalist to interpret data that would be in a news release kit."

The ultimate goal of all this slick, collaborative fakery is blatantly obvious: to induce the maximum possible number of victims of various real or imagined medical conditions to go to their doctors and demand the covertly advertised medicines.

TV's improper use of the pharmaceutical industry's tilted VNRs has gone on for years without public scrutiny. Last December 11 and 12, however, the practice finally came under sharp fire in little-noted testimony at a hearing of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. The testimony came from Eugene Secunda, an expert on VNR production who is an assistant professor of marketing at Baruch College in New York City, and David Jones, a former public affairs vice president at Abbott Laboratories who had previously worked for two other leading pharmaceutical houses, CIBA-GEIGY and Marion Laboratories. He left Abbott in disgust over objectionable marketing, promotion and pricing practices.

Committee chair Edward Kennedy asked Secunda whether VNRs "are by their very nature meant to deceive the viewer." Secunda's reply was damning: "They are meant to deceive in the sense that they do not represent themselves as a promotional message. When the television audience does not recognize that there is a promotional objective to be achieved, that is inherent deception."

Jones was equally blunt. "The news media now is a major outlet, particularly when the message you are trying to dis-

# 'News' About Xanax

Early this year on its evening newscast, Detroit television station WJBK aired a "health feature" about Xanax, an anti-anxiety drug, that included portions of a video news release. Expanding on the VNR segments, the newscaster told viewers: "The Food and Drug Administration recently approved the drug Xanax for treatment of panic attacks. Panic attacks strike 2 million people each year. Experts say two out of three victims are women but famous athletes can be victims as well." The next image on the screen showed former football star Earl Campbell speaking about panic attacks and, in the next image, in action on the field. Viewers then saw two sets of slick graphics listing the mental and physical symptoms of panic attacks. Next, another shot of Campbell breaking tackles as he sprinted for a touchdown. Then a quick shot of Jerilyn Ross, identified only as a "panic attack expert," saying that panic attacks can strike anyone and that victims are not "wimpy people."

Ross is president of the Anxiety Disorder Association of America. The organization accepts financial contributions from The Upjohn Company, which produced the VNR in house. In fact, the Kalamazoo, Michigan, business has donated large sums of money to the A.D.A.A., including nearly $128,000 in 1988 alone. That's more than the A.D.A.A. received from all its membership dues. Campbell and Ross were filmed at an Upjohn-sponsored press conference held soon after the F.D.A. had announced approval of Xanax. They, as well as other conference participants, were paid by the drug company.

TV viewers were told none of these facts. Instead, the anchor said, "Doctors . . . believe attacks start deep in the brain and that Xanax quiets that region. . . . Doctors say there seem to be few side effects to the drug but some people may have to be on it for the rest of their lives." Actually, in some cases Xanax does have serious adverse effects, such as blurred vision, sexual dysfunction, confusion, dizziness, impaired attention and addiction.

Upjohn spokesperson Godfrey Grant says the VNR that was used to help shape the news segment was not meant to promote the drug. "It is an educational piece," he contends. "The VNR was intended to help increase public understanding of a disorder that is largely misdiagnosed."

Many pharmaceutical companies now have marketing budgets that dwarf their medical education budgets. "Medical education is now determined by what the marketing department wants, not what doctors need," according to David Jones, a former public affairs executive for three large prescription drug companies. "In fact, at CIBA-GEIGY [where Jones once worked] medical education was moved out of R&D and into public affairs to assure that education supported marketing, and that scientists did not get in the way."

Dr. Sidney Wolfe, director of the Public Citizen Health Research Group, puts it even more bluntly: "It's very embarrassing to be a scientist for a drug company and see that, despite your hard work and in many cases your ethical behavior, when push comes to shove the marketing people take over."

S.T.T. AND M.M.

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tribute is a little questionable," he told Kennedy. In a recent interview, he said, "Many VNRs are terribly misleading. The media aren't doing what the public expects them to do—which is screen, evaluate and judge the information they get. Journalistic rigor is missing."

Strikingly, the absence of journalistic rigor troubled David Bartlett, director of the Radio and Television News Directors Association, and a knowledgeable Washington TV reporter who asked not to be named. "We have no problem with a station taking a piece of B roll or soundbite out of a VNR and putting it into a story," Bartlett said. "We do have a very, very big problem with folks who use VNRs deceptively, without identifying the source, without proper context, or [referring to their airing of uncut VNRs] the most egregious sin of all."

Many in the television industry won't admit to using uncut, unedited or unbalanced VNRs. But the Washington TV reporter, when asked whether the use of VNRs is fair to the viewers, reflected for a moment before saying, "Perhaps we do the viewer a disservice when we use a VNR—even if we alter it—without identifying that the main . . . resource for this story is a pharmaceutical company. Perhaps that is a disservice."

Her "perhaps" would be deleted by Dr. George Lundberg, editor in chief for scientific publications of the American Medical Association. "Our ten A.M.A. journals require full disclosure of financial interests of authors, editors, reviewers and editorial board members," Lundberg told us. "For a television station to receive and use promotional information from a company without appropriate editing to inform the viewer of the financial interests of the producer of that information would seem to me to be a gross breach of good ethical practices and against the public interest."

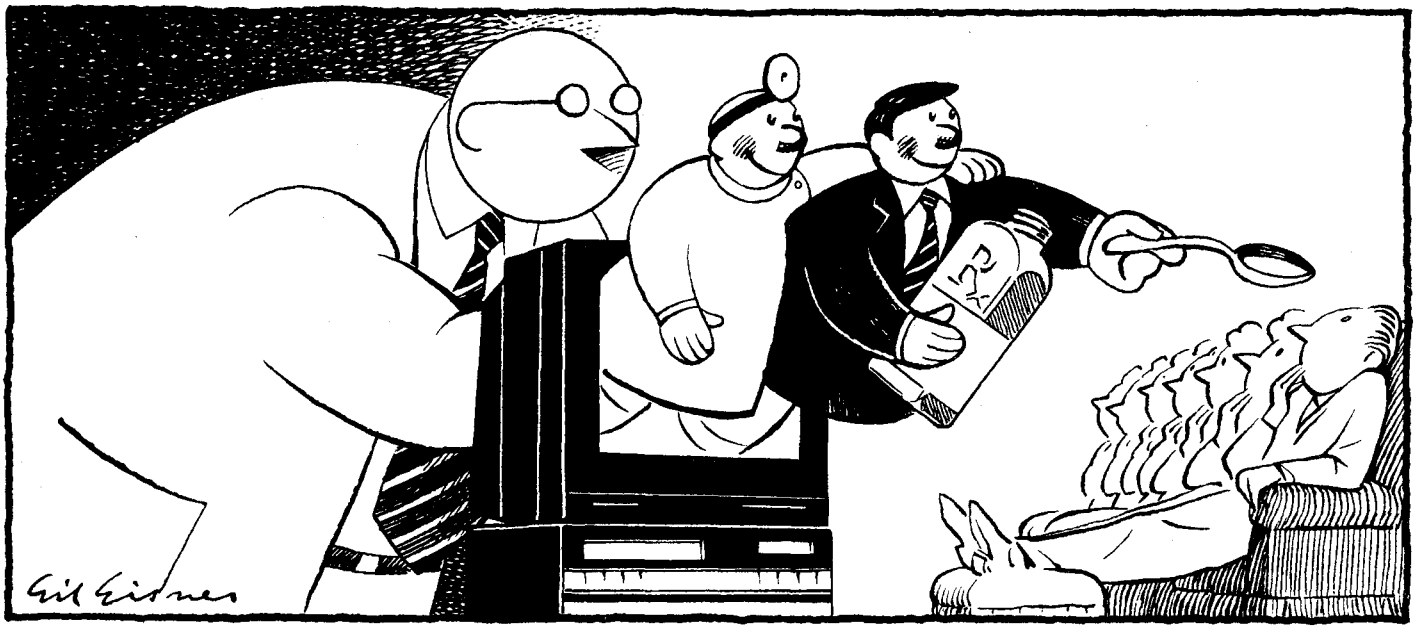
Yet, while many specifics are elusive, there's no doubt that the use of pharmaceutical and other VNRs is widespread and growing. Last year alone, various industries offered about 4,000 of them to local TV stations, by the estimate of Nielsen Media Research. In a survey of TV news departments, 51 percent of news professionals said they preferred VNRs that were medical- or health-related. And it's a good bet that most of those came from the drug industry. At the Food and Drug Law Institute conference, the CIBA-GEIGY representative said that "about 300" TV stations usually picked up its VNRs. "This is very cost-effective," she pointed out.

Among the diverse companies also sponsoring VNRs are Disneyland, McDonald's and Odor Eaters. Last year a group of wealthy Kuwaitis hired Hill & Knowlton, the high-powered P.R. firm, to produce VNRs for its anti-Iraq propaganda campaign. In addition, members of Congress field questions in VNRs that are aired in their home districts by local TV stations, which usually don't reveal that the questioners are the legislators' press secretaries.

Also in 1990, Nielsen Media Research and Medialink, the largest VNR distributor, surveyed television news directors and editors. Each week, according to the survey, 15.2 percent of those polled said they had used at least one unedited VNR, while 78 percent said they had used at least one they had edited. The quality of the editing, of course, varies widely.

Notably, the Kennedy committee's invitations to four leading drug companies (Abbott, CIBA-GEIGY, Wyeth-Ayerst, and Hoffman-LaRoche) to testify were spurned. But industry spokesperson Gerald Mossinghoff, president of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, did show up. He professed surprise at the extent of his industry's use of VNRs. "I honestly had not known about [P.M.A. member] companies' use of VNRs until I read [the transcript of the hearing] yesterday," he testified. "Well," Kennedy said, "it is the most dramatically new . . . promotional device that has been developed in recent years, and it is amazing to me that you are not familiar with it."

"Believe me," a committee aide said afterward, P.M.A. representatives "spent plenty of time figuring out what they were going to say, and they realized they couldn't say a damn thing about it—that anything they would say would get them screwed because VNRs are misleading stuff. So [Mossinghoff] said he's never heard of companies using them. Come on. That's ridiculous." But Mossinghoff was on the mark, albeit self-servingly, when he told *Newsday* for a June 21 article that

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it's ultimately the TV stations that "determine what warrants showing to the public."

The powerful, synergistic forces that drive TV stations to use drug-industry VNRs include:

§ *the weakening economics of local television, which enhances the desire for slick news segments with designer features but not designer prices.* In all but the very largest markets, such as New York and Los Angeles, few stations can afford to originate all the material used on their local newscasts. "Because of the downsizing of news staffs and the general financial crunch," says Jill Olmsted, a professor of broadcast journalism at The American University in Washington, "stations are often running VNRs in their entirety or some portion of them." Professor Secunda told Kennedy, "The harsh realities of this marketplace make it extremely likely that the use of video news releases will . . . increase." (Meanwhile, *Newsweek* has reported a related defeat for journalistic balance: TV stations throughout the country, knuckling under to advertiser pressure, are shucking their watchdog consumer reporters.)

§ *the strong appeal of VNRs to marketers—so long as viewers perceive them as credible, genuine news—as an almost ideal alternative to paid commercials.* Increasingly, advertisers have tended to conclude that the seductive power of commercials is oozing away—that more and more viewers see them as signals to go to the kitchen for a beer. As Secunda testified, "Commercials are losing their ability to stimulate consumer sales. Viewers' minds began to boggle and rebel as the number of commercial minutes in each programming hour increased and the standard thirty-second commercial was replaced by a blizzard [of fifteen- and ten-second ads]." The logical corollary to Secunda's assessment was suggested by Senator Kennedy in a statement provided for this article: "VNRs are worthwhile to drug companies only if the corporate sponsor is never revealed. They would lose their value if viewers knew that the so-called news story is actually a commercial."

§ *the unquenchable thirst of countless Americans for health news, most of all for happy news of the "new, breakthrough" drug that they hope will cure their maladies and maybe extend their lives.* Health is the hot topic of the 1990s, said Olmsted. "I would hope that stations would be suspicious of bias when airing anything as a health issue," she added. Distinguishing between edited and unedited VNRs, she said that the greater the reliance on canned footage, the more spurious the "news" segment.

§ *the huge payoffs for the drug industry in stimulating public demand for its products.* VNRs can be a phenomenally good investment, as the CIBA-GEIGY representative pointed out. Costing a modest $20,000 to $30,000 each, they are much less expensive than the purchase of TV airtime on just a few stations. In the big picture, VNRs are part of drug-industry promotional expenditures, estimated at a staggering $5 billion a year. Inexorably, outlays of such magnitude have helped cause the prices of prescription drugs to skyrocket over the past decade. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, overall inflation rose 46 percent from 1981 to 1989, but prescription-drug prices rose 128 percent.

VNRs and other marketing tools drive up the cost of drugs "by creating inappropriately high expectations of what a drug can do, which then provides the psychological underpinnings of an extremely aggressive [i.e., inflated] price," says David Jones, the former pharmaceutical company official. All too often, the high expectations and exploitative prices are created for a "me too" drug virtually identical to, and no better than, possibly a dozen others already on the market.

§ *the utter failure—up to now—of the Food and Drug Administration to develop and enforce policies to stop pharmaceutical houses from using VNRs and other promotional devices to circumvent F.D.A. regulations for prescription drugs. Those rules clearly require advertising and promotion to incorporate in brief summary the minuses as well as the pluses of a drug's officially approved labeling, including warnings and uses that are hazardous because of contraindications.* "The judgment of the F.D.A. has been terrible in terms of determining when something is violative and what you do when it is violative," Dr. Sidney Wolfe, director of the Public Citizen Health Research Group, said in an interview.

But new F.D.A. Commissioner David Kessler's surprising injection of vitality into F.D.A. law enforcement—including a doubling of the staff of enforcers of the advertising and promotion rules—changes the outlook dramatically. "It's a whole new ball game," says Wolfe. "They are now taking actions that are consistent with being a regulatory agency rather than being a patsy for the drug industry."

In a speech, Kessler said that VNRs and other "new promotional techniques" blur the line between promotion and scientific exchange. He went on to say that all information about prescription drugs must "be true and not misleading . . . [must] provide 'fair balance' [and must not] promote unapproved uses." He told *Newsday*, "And that means you're not only going to talk about the benefits of a drug, you also have to talk about the risks." By year's end, he said, he wants new regulations for drug-industry VNRs to be proposed by the F.D.A.'s Division of Marketing, Advertising, and Communications, whose new director, Ann Witt, was praised by Wolfe.

In June, Kessler told the House Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations, "In no uncertain terms let me say to the medical community that we will subject not only the manufacturers but all those involved in the manufacturers' promotion to the full force of the law." (Dr. Lundberg, the top A.M.A. editor, raised the possibility that a TV station using a drug-company VNR promoting a drug or medical device for an unapproved use "is probably in violation of federal law.")

The first hard indication of a looming crackdown came on August 1, when the F.D.A. put the drug companies on formal notice that promotional VNRs and material disseminated with them must be reported to the agency "as part of their required submissions of advertising and promotional labeling."

If the F.D.A. ultimately adopts rules that effectively deter drug companies from producing and distributing biased, violative VNR commercials, there could be an ironic collateral result: Thanks to government intervention on behalf of honest news, the ethical lapses of TV stations in relaying such propaganda could become irrelevant. □

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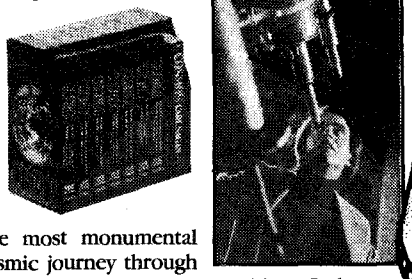

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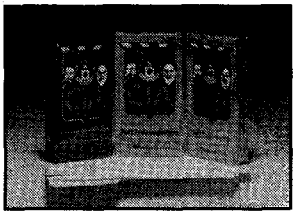

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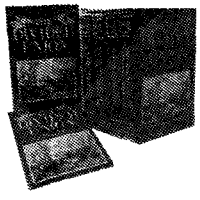

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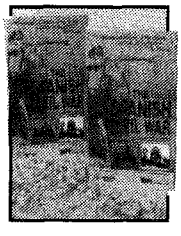

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# BOOKS & THE ARTS.

## Roll On, Columbus, Roll On

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

Louis MacNeice) and literally uncountable numbers of poems in shorter forms.

I don't know how to prove it, but I would say Columbus has appeared in more works of European and American art than any other historical figure, with the possible exception of Jesus.

The fictional Columbus has borne scant relation to the real Columbus, of course—after all, so has the historical Columbus—but he has served very well as the malleable clay for each successive creator to make into a serviceable character. He has been the emblematic Explorer, personifying the whole outward thrust of Europe in the early modern age; the Great Discoverer, symbolizing the achievement of opening up the wealth of the Americas to the European subcontinent; the quintessential Hero, embodying the triumphant individual destined to overcome all adversity; the representative of Spanish adventure and romance, of Italian genius and devotion, of European rationality and progress. He has been solon, fanatic, lover, zealot, victim, tyrant, scientist, mariner, even wizard.

And of course the impending Quincentenary of the Columbian landfall has inspired a new rush of works, perhaps not all designed solely to cash in on what promises to be a time of high hullabaloo and low huckstering. One Spanish opera has already been presented and the New York Metropolitan Opera has commissioned another for October 1992, from an unlikely duo of Philip Glass and David Henry Hwang. At least two movies are in the making, both fictional rather than historical ventures, one from a screenplay by Mario Puzo (who reputedly refused to read a single book on the subject in advance). A variety of literary magazines on both sides of the Atlantic are devoting special issues to creative works celebrating the Discovery, and the Spanish government has announced several prizes, including something called Letras de Oro, coordinated by the University of Miami, for "works on the Quincentenary concept."

And then the books. By my count there are something like half a hundred that are timed for the Quincentenary (not excluding, of course, my own), among them at least a half-dozen novels out so far and probably that many again planned for next fall. It is the most recent of those—and a remarkably disparate lot they are, too—that I want to consider here.

**IN THIS REVIEW**

1492: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JUAN CABEZON OF CASTILE. *By Homero Aridjis. Translated by Betty Ferber. Summit. 284 pp. $21.95.*

THE HARP AND THE SHADOW. *By Alejo Carpentier. Mercury House. 159 pp. $16.95.*

SEA OF LENTILS. *By Antonio Benítez-Rojo. Translated by James Maraniss. University of Massachusetts. 201 pp. $22.95. Paper $10.95.*

THE HEIRS OF COLUMBUS. *By Gerald Vizenor. Wesleyan University/University Press of New England. 189 pp. $18.95.*

THE CROWN OF COLUMBUS. *By Michael Dorris and Louise Erdrich. HarperCollins. 382 pp. $21.95.*

OCTOBER WIND. *By Susan Wiggs. Tor Books. 576 pp. Paper $4.99.*

We should probably begin by discounting entirely Homero Aridjis's *1492*, since it really has nothing to do with Columbus, except that the narrator sets off with him on the first voyage in the final paragraph of the book; indeed, for literary if not commercial purposes it might better have been served by a different title. It is in fact a somewhat slow-going pastiche of ordinary people and quotidian events designed to show what life was like for Jews (and *conversos*) in Spain from the first all-out pogrom in 1391 to the final expulsion of the Jews in 1492. It is harrowing history, a grisly account that suggests well the depravity and misery of the culture from which the Columbian adventure was launched. Nothing is explicit, but the suggestion is that Columbus here is being appropriated to serve as a symbol of a new world contrasted with all of that, as is hinted by the title of a subsequent companion novel, *1492: Memorias del nuevo mundo*, which has yet to be published in English.

Of the remaining works, we have what I might briefly characterize as a "magical realist" polemic (by the late Alejo Carpentier), an arduous literary exercise (Antonio Benítez-Rojo), an inventive, experimental non-novel (Gerald Vizenor), an interesting but fatally flawed bespoke production (Michael Dorris–Louise Erdrich) and a potboiler of the historical romance genre (Susan Wiggs). In turn:

*The Harp and the Shadow* was published last year, but I include it here because it strikes me as the most interestingly written of the recent crop. Its rather elaborate premise is that we are to follow the Vatican's process of evaluating Columbus for sainthood—a study that was indeed taken up in the 1870s with the blessing of Pope Pius IX—through which we are treated to a variety of historical and mythical glimpses of the Admiral. That permits Carpentier, a Cuban, to make his case against the rule by Columbus and his appointees in early Española, a combination of the plentiful facts and his own condemnatory fantasies that I suppose is fitting for a magical realist of the Marquezian school—though it does get precious after a while.

In the end (after rather too much about the beatification process), Columbus is rejected for sainthood, not only on the grounds that he was cruel to the Indians, that he began the business of trans-Atlantic slavery and that he kept a mistress in Cordova by whom he had a child, but more substantially because he had failed to achieve an authentic miracle of the kind the church requires. (If just *finding* America was a miracle, as some argued, then probably dozens of sailors from Bjarni Herjolfsson on down could be sanctified.) While that makes for a rather more interesting portrait of the Admiral than we are usually given—we see him for example as a heartless and basically inept administrator, something his anchors-away advocates never like to talk about—it is also fair to say that the rendering is less than three-dimensional, that once again Columbus is being used, this time as the centerpiece of a fairly old-fashioned anticolonial tirade.

*Sea of Lentils*, also from the Spanish,

*Kirkpatrick Sale is the author of a half-dozen books, including* SDS *(Random House) and* Human Scale *(Coward), and most recently* The Conquest of Paradise: Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy *(Knopf), just published in paperback by NAL/Plume.*

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is by another Cuban writer, one who has opted for the United States but whose point of view is not all that different. Benítez-Rojo has described his book as "a deconstructionist novel, no question," and I guess he means to suggest that either it doesn't have a conventional plot (which it doesn't) or that it is a multileveled and many-sided treatment of history (which it isn't). It attempts to provide an impressionistic view of the European conquest of America through four distinct stories: the deathbed reminiscences of King Philip II; a recounting of the romantic and commercial arrangements that led John Hawkins to begin the English slave trade from Africa; an account of the Spanish colonizers who founded St. Augustine and brutally exterminated their French rivals; and the adventures of a common soldier who shipped out with Columbus on his second voyage and stayed on in Española for a decade more. These four stories are interwoven, or I should better say interspaced, so as to suggest some artful intermingling of themes, or perhaps so as to divert our attention from the thinness of each were it presented separately.

The narrative of the Columbian soldier provides a kind of from-the-bottom-up look at what life under Columbus's rule must have been like for the ordinary colonist in those first settlements: a rapacious, cruel, gold-obsessed, disease-infested life, in which Indians were used and abused at will and turned into instruments of the settlers' whimsy, while the settlers were used and abused as instruments of the crown's whimsy. The point is somewhat tediously made—"those days of war and hunger. . . . everything was upside down and smelled of blood. . . . after ruining their cultivations and everything that might be edible, even the still greening fruits that hung in the trees, the Indians began to kill themselves. . . . [hunger] squeezed in the belts and made the bones dance beneath the armor plates"—but made it is, and it is certainly a nice corrective on the usual depictions of the great Admiral of the Ocean Sea. Again, of course, the idea is not to present Columbus in the round but only as one more exhibit for the prosecution in the case against colonialism.

*The Heirs of Columbus* is an attempt, I assume, at a kind of truly Indian fiction—Vizenor teaches Native American literature at Berkeley—that is an amalgam of the sensibility of tribal myth-making, the inventiveness and playfulness

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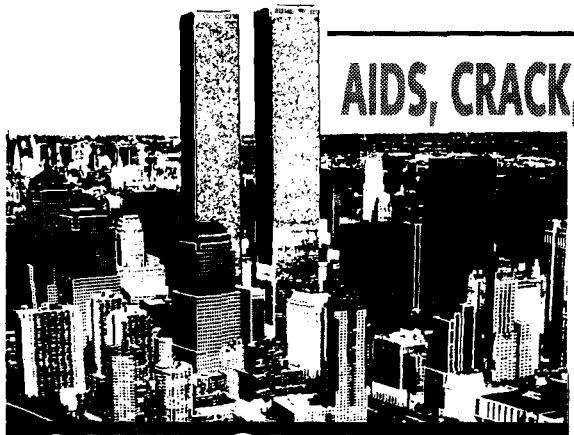

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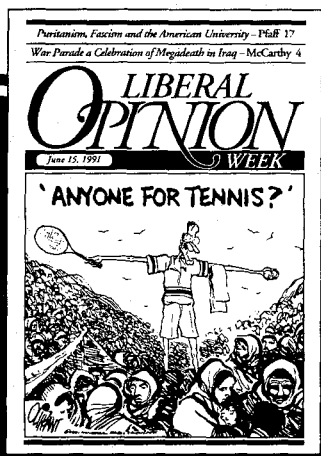
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of trickster stories and the techniques of a modern avant-garde novelist. As that, I'd have to judge it successful, though the result is hardly a novel, at least in the standard narrative sense, and one must rest content with a series of vaguely connected dreams with recurring characters and repeated images and themes, sometimes quite touching, sometimes less so.

Columbus here is not a character at all but rather an idea, manipulated by the author on the one hand and a modern Indian character named Stone Columbus on the other. Stone, you see, is one of the Heirs of Columbus—he happens to run a late-night radio talk show and has become rich from operating a tribally sovereign casino, but that's too complicated just now—who are healers in Indian country, who dream of the original Admiral and repeat the stories that live in their blood. They know that the Mayans took civilization to the ancient Greeks and that Columbus was a descendant of these Indians, inheritor of their "blue radiance." His "discovery" was simply a coming home, a living out of the stories in *his* blood, during which he became liberated as he became seduced by a native "hand talker" named Samana when he landed in the Caribbean; subsequently his spirit, scorned in the Old World, came to reside at "the headwaters of the great river in the New World." And so on: You will appreciate that it's not so easy to fathom, less so to retell.

In spite of the heavy admixture of fantasy, an idea of the real Columbus does come through here with a good deal of accuracy, and not without sympathy. Vizenor has done his homework (in which, I am obliged to say, I am mentioned), but his achievement is more than that: He understands the wilder, irrational, half-mad parts of the Discoverer's soul as few people ever have. It is ironic that it takes an Indian to know and depict that crucial dimension of the man who, in service to the other dimensions of his soul, destroyed the Indian world that was. Ironic, too, that Columbus is appropriated here in an entirely new way, made to be an Indian in service to his Indian descendants.

*The Crown of Columbus* is difficult to read without remembering that the Dorris-Erdrich team got some $1.5 million to turn out a book from their Indian perspective for the Quincentenary. Put that aside, though, and there is a fair bit of entertainment—discounting some dreary chapters depicting the life of the dreary man who is a central character, and an interminable free-verse poem about Columbus recited by that same leaden man—and there are as well some neat interspersings of debunking and demythifying along with some artful presentations of Indian-angled perceptions of the Columbian legacy. Columbus, insofar as he matters at all, is rightfully treated as a "naïve innocent" in a world he could never understand, even as he set about laying waste to it.

A few minor historical errors occur, and there's a peculiar confusion of Columbus's mistress, Beatriz de Arana, with the ruler of Gomera, Beatriz (or, in some accounts, Ines) Peraza, but what undermines the basic conception of the book—even given that it is a novel, for it otherwise pretends to verisimilitude—is a historical flaw so glaring that at first I presumed it intentional. You see, the plot turns on the idea that there was a crown that Columbus gave to an Indian chief on his first voyage, a gift long lost whose existence is confirmed in parts of his log and a letter that has been missing for centuries. Then pages from the log and the letter come to light in the present, discovered by an Indian woman who teaches at Dartmouth, and that sends her off on an adventure that eventually leads, in a most improbable way, to the crown itself.

The trouble is that the page from the letter, as translated into English, a facsimile of which is printed on page 145 of the book, ends with Columbus writing, "Given in the settlement of Isabela on the twenty-eighth of January in the year fourteen hundred and ninety-two." Well, Isabela was the name of the settlement that Columbus established on his *second* voyage, not his first, in January *1494*, not 1492, and indeed in January 1492 Columbus was still in Granada, Spain, trying to get his voyage approved. So this is clearly not an authentic document, one would suppose, and I assumed that eventually this would be revealed, so we would know that there was skulduggery afoot and the crown referred to didn't really exist. Except that no mention of this mistake is ever made, the page is taken throughout to be genuine, and in the end there really is a crown. It is a mistake not merely incidental but crucial, and for me fatal to the plot. Erdrich and Dorris, who write so convincingly elsewhere from their own experience, seem here to have been a little hasty in trying to exploit Columbus's.

*October Wind*, subtitled *A Novel of Christopher Columbus*, is certainly not that, but it has more about Columbus—or as he is properly rendered here, Cristó-

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bal Colón—than any of the other books, and a good deal of research has gone into it. Still, through a process that must have its own rules and logic, this becomes nothing more than a crude historical romance, of the "whipping his head around, he glanced at his pursuers"/"she guided him to flesh that was soft and warm" variety. As when Queen Isabella, known in fact to be notoriously hardheaded, first sees Colón: "His appearance struck her like a thunderbolt, causing her heart to stiffen against her stiff bodice and her fingers to clench around the tassels of her cushion." I guess it takes a certain talent to write like that.

As to Colón, he is exactly the kind of ever-heroic paladin such novels abound in. But it did make me wonder why, in this day and age, when we know so much about Columbus, writers go on conveying such a synthetic image, even writers using bodice-ripping conventions. Because the character in reality was so much more complex and interesting than the one served up here—he was, for example, an inveterate liar, nearly a charlatan, mentally unstable, and capable of great and poetic heights of passion, pride and self-pity—and I would think that makes for a far more intriguing novelistic figure, even in the potboiling world. But I guess in fiction as in most of the histories to date, the true Columbus is not of much interest.

And so we hurtle into the last year of the countdown to October 1992, with very little indeed to show for it on the artistic side. A hundred years ago we were at least given Dvorak's *New World Symphony* and the famous series of commemorative stamps of scenes from Columbus's life. None of what has emerged recently stacks up to that, certainly nothing on the literary side: Not one of these half-dozen entries seems likely to have a lasting place in the Columbian, much less the literary, canon. I can't help but think of the poem begun for the Quatercentenary by Algernon Charles Swinburne, in 1891, of such pathetic triteness that he gave it up after six lines, deciding Columbus was not a fit figure for serious art.

Perhaps he is not, after all. We shall see. If something complex and textured does not emerge over the next year, given all the attention this time around, it might be right to conclude that the oil of art and the water of Columbus do not mix. It may be that he is too freighted a personage to be manipulable enough for successful fiction, that he *always* has to turn into symbol and icon (or anti-icon),

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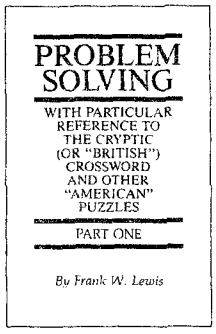
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no matter how diligent the artist, and that at best he can only sit on the fringes as metaphor, never stand in the center as man. Certainly I can think of no fictional portrait of Columbus over the years, from that first in 1581 right down to the novels here, that in any way rises above stick-figure banality, and that goes even for James Fenimore Cooper's *Mercedes of Castile* and C.S. Forester's *To the Indies*, perhaps the bravest attempts.

With the possible exception of Washington Irving's *The Life and Voyages of Columbus*, where there *is* an interesting made-up figure—but that, of course, was supposed to be factual history. ☐

# Politics by Other Means

ANTHONY ASTRACHAN

WHOSE SCIENCE? WHOSE KNOWLEDGE? Thinking From Women's Lives. *By Sandra Harding. Cornell. 319 pp. $34.50. Paper $12.95.*

Feminist ideas about science—the way we deal with the world around us—have even more revolutionary potential than the more familiar feminist ideas about society—the way we deal with one another—that have shaped so many changes in the past two decades.

Sandra Harding is a tireless fighter for the feminist revolution in science. She has written two books and edited or co-edited four on the epistemology and methodology of science. *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* surveys and analyzes feminist theories on these subjects. She is widely read, scrupulously fair in weighing opposing views and unusual in her determination to make middle-class white readers recognize that feminists, people of color, workers, the poor, lesbians and gay men, and even—a welcome surprise—straight, bourgeois men can share their respective standpoints and thereby reshape science.

Unfortunately, the book in which Harding puts forth these ideas is hard to read because she is a wooden, repetitive writer. Worse, she provides few clues to the answers to her significant questions because she is not a scientist and has little notion of how the ideas she discusses might affect, say, nuclear physics.

Harding frequently cites Evelyn Fox Keller's *Reflections on Gender and Science* (1985), which is precisely what her book is not—elegantly written and informed on every page not only by Keller's feminism but also by her experience as a physicist, biologist and historian of science.

The feminist challenge goes far beyond the denial of opportunity in science to women. Harding notes that science's discrimination against women impeaches its claim to universality, but emphasizes that it is more important for women to function as thinkers concerned about science and society than as a special interest group pleading only for their own interests.

Feminist thinkers insist that science and scientists are not what they conventionally claim to be and what Western society usually agrees they are: objective, value-free, neutral seekers of knowledge, independent of society and human emotion. In the radical feminist view (shared by a number of male observers, including this one) science is sexist and androcentric. It is shaped as well by other dominant values of society in both capitalist and command-economy systems, aggressively pursuing the domination of nature in ways that insult or injure it and incidentally providing resources for some states, classes or peoples to dominate others.

That analysis is one proof that science is "socially situated." Harding finds another in the way modern science developed in the political struggles that brought Europe out of medieval feudalism. She says the physics of Galileo and Newton "expressed the ethos of an emerging class (materialism, anti-elitism, progress) and also provided the means for expressing that ethos in technologies that could materially advance that class."

Harding demonstrates the sexism of science and the identification of science with masculinity in two ways I find striking. One is by looking at the language of science. Francis Bacon spoke of "a chaste and lawful marriage between Mind and Nature," but Harding quotes what she calls Bacon's "rape metaphors": "For you have but to hound nature in her wanderings and you will be able when you like to lead and drive her afterwards to the same place again. Neither ought a man to make scruple of entering and penetrating into those holes and corners when the inquisition of truth is his whole object."

*Anthony Astrachan is the author of* How Men Feel: Their Response to Women's Demands for Equality and Power *(Anchor Press).*

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It's hardly surprising when contemporary thinkers build similar metaphors. In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, physicist (and liberal humanist) Richard Feynman called the idea that inspired his work an "old lady, who has very little that's attractive left in her. . . . But we can say the best we can for any old woman, that she has become a very good mother and has given birth to some very good children."

The second perception of the masculinity of science grows out of the object-relations theory of psychoanalysis as articulated by such thinkers as Nancy Hartsock, Jane Flax, Nancy Chodorow and Dorothy Dinnerstein. (Harding deals with this idea only in passing in *Whose Science?*, but at greater length in her 1986 book, *The Science Question in Feminism*.) The theory deals with the development of the infant, who first recognizes the self as different from the other, with the mother as the primary other, and then, if he or she reaches true maturity, recognizes the other as not merely an object but as a subject like oneself. Our culture reinforces "the child's earliest associations of female with the pleasures and dangers of merging, and male with both the comfort and the loneliness of separateness," as Keller puts it. It thus encourages boys to separate from the other more firmly than girls, to seek a more rigid autonomy and independence that is identified with masculinity.

Science similarly, and equally unconsciously, seeks a masculine identity when it insists that the subject (the scientist, the knower) and object (some piece or process of nature, the known) are distinct and separate—the origin of the idea of objectivity. Science identifies itself as masculine when it maintains that it is autonomous, independent of society and of the emotions of the humans who do science. It does so again when it claims dominance or mastery, as it does in "using" the object to confirm or refute a hypothesis, or in manipulating objects to make predicted events happen, in psychoanalyst Ernest Schachtel's characterization.

Harding does not believe that either science or people have to develop this way; she moves from individual to class in chapters on feminist epistemology and "strong objectivity." The epistemology consists of observations and theory about nature and social relations that spring from the perspective of women's daily lives. As "strangers" to the social order in which men are natives, women, like the best anthropologists, can hear things the natives wouldn't tell one another and see patterns that are difficult for the natives to detect. As frequent losers in the social battle of the sexes, women have different tales to tell historians than the men who often win. And women labor more than men to unify mind and body to transform natural substances into socially defined goods.

Women are therefore essential, in Harding's view, to strong objectivity, which demands that scientific research examine not only all the evidence for and against a hypothesis but also all the background assumptions and beliefs that affect the research, among them the political values and social situations of scientists and the people or institutions that finance them. Science must be able to criticize itself, and to do so effectively, it must see itself from the standpoints of women and other outsiders, particularly racial and sexual minorities.

These ideas are compelling, but they hold many traps. If you believe that women develop into individuals with more feelings of connectedness than men, for instance, it's easy to sound as though you think that they can't or shouldn't escape the nurturing functions to which most societies have traditionally confined


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them. Harding surely doesn't intend to take that view, but she never examines aggression or dominance in women. She never considers the idea that aggression is, at its broadest, the desire to change the external world, and that it is not always destructive. It can liberate people and build civilization(s). Harding certainly believes women have done much more of both of them than they are usually given credit for, but she keeps insisting that they do this only in the ways they are different from men; she acknowledges that women are similar to men in other ways, but doesn't examine them.

That leads her into the trap of overreliance on Carol Gilligan, who argues that women's moral development differs from men's, emphasizing relationships and responsibility rather than the rights on which cognitive morality focuses. The trouble is that most people use both cognitive and interactional morality, as the late Norma Haan, of the Institute of Human Development at Berkeley, showed. Women use interactional more than cognitive, but so did black teenagers of both sexes in one test. Perhaps the relatively powerless of all genders and colors use interactional morality more.

Harding doesn't seem to know that idea, though it supports her insistence that all groups on the margins of Western society have standpoints that can make science more effective. Pursuing this point, she quotes uncritically and sloppily from several chapters of Ivan Van Sertima's collection of essays, *Blacks in Science: Ancient and Modern*, which needs critical analysis. In one case, she simply misquotes, making an example of "Great Zimbabwe, a massive stone city more than eight hundred years old that was not rediscovered by researchers until 1982." I was startled, because I had explored Great Zimbabwe as a journalist in 1968 after reading several scholars. The Van Sertima authors she cites, Molefi and Kariamu Asante, lament the racism of European writers who refused to believe that Africans could have built such impressive structures, but the Asantes refer to papers published in 1893 and 1896 and to the 1931 book by G. Caton-Thompson that recognized the city's African origins. More than a dozen other papers taking that view were published before 1982.

Harding also looks at Western neglect of Asian science as portrayed by the Sri Lankan scholar Susantha Goonatilake in *Aborted Discovery: Science and Creativity in the Third World*. She gives him only half a page, which is regrettable for two reasons. One is that Goonatilake takes a more sophisticated approach to material he knows better than most of Van Sertima's authors do theirs, so he is more convincing to the skeptical reader. The other is that Goonatilake demonstrates Harding's strong objectivity in analyzing the views of Asian thought of writers such as Fritjof Capra.

I liked Harding's determination to move from race and culture to sexuality, to show that a lesbian standpoint can be just as fruitful as a feminist or racial-minority standpoint for learning and knowing. Then I came to this passage: "From the perspective of heterosexual women's lives, women appear to have no sexual agency. It is only from the perspective of lesbian lives that women can imagine female sexualities that are not just for others but *for* women, ourselves." This echoes feminist debates of the 1970s but ignores millions of heterosexual women who've been demonstrating their sexual agency since then and preventing men from monopolizing control of the sexual revolution. This attitude lessens Harding's appeal to feminists and members of all other "liberatory knowledge projects" to know one another's perspectives and her effort to persuade men to think in ways that begin from women's lives. It's too bad, because her conviction that men can use feminist insights and add to them is generous and seldom heard in feminist rhetoric.

Harding titles her final chapter "What Is Feminist Science?" and explores various answers on the epistemological level. Ruth Bleier, for instance, says feminist science would not be elite and authoritarian and would acknowledge that each new "truth" is incomplete as well as culture-bound. Stephen Jay Gould anticipates this point in graceful words that Harding quotes: "Science, since people must do it, is a socially embedded activity. . . . Facts are not pure and unsullied bits of information; culture also influences what we see and how we see it. Theories, moreover, are not inexorable inductions from facts. The most creative theories are often imaginative visions imposed upon facts; the source of imagination is also strongly cultural."

These are axioms of feminist and other metatheories of science. Harding admits that in areas such as physics and chemistry, unlike biology and the social sciences, "there just aren't any research programs directed by feminist theories about science." She attributes this to the international organization of research in the hard sciences, which are "less susceptible to the kind of feminist influences that have been effective in more locally organized social research programs." She goes so far as to acknowledge that even if "science is politics by other means . . . it still can produce reliable information about the empirical world . . . reliable, that is, for some group or another's purposes."

That is just not enough. If Harding is correct in her metatheories (as I think she is), it should be possible to move beyond the social situation of science, to deal with the work of natural sciences in matters other than the abuse of reproductive medicine, and to show the successes and failures from the feminist standpoint. Keller's *Reflections* does just that. □

# MUSIC.

## GENE SANTORO

### Hidden Histories

Allan Bloom has analogues all over the cultural landscape, and jazz is no exception. The One Great Tradition theory is currently popular in neocon jazz quarters; Jelly Roll to Louis to Duke to Bird—it sounds almost like a triple-play combo. And yet it takes nothing away from such indisputable greats to admit that there have been numberless musicians whose names have rarely become known to general audiences, or even to most jazz fans, who have nevertheless exerted a profound influence on the folks they played with as well as on those who've come after them.

Take, for example, the impact on Muhal Richard Abrams, founder of the seminal Chicago-based Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, of two historical ciphers, King Fleming and John Dennis. Fleming led a big band in Chicago in the early 1950s and gave the then fledgling pianist Abrams his first gig as an arranger. In 1962 Fleming cut *Stand By* (Argo), an extraordinary excursion into rhythmic invention. His recordings never got out of Chicago in any significant way; now in his 70s, he plays lounges in suburban Illinois and the Midwest. In 1955 the Philadelphia-based Dennis made one record as a leader, *New Piano Expressions*, for Debut, the label founded by Charles Mingus and Max Roach; that record was also poorly distributed. Nobody's quite sure what happened to

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Dennis after that. But the two-handed approach to the keyboard that he and Fleming favored caused Abrams to rethink the post-Bud Powell attack that, with its atrophied left hand and lightning-bolt right, dominated postwar jazz for a couple of generations.

As Abrams—who, along with the A.A.C.M., is now based in New York—sees it, "Fleming and Dennis don't play licks; they play ideas. That's the older school, like Fats Waller and Art Tatum, again. Those guys weren't interested in a body of licks that were set down by one or two people that they could grab and make clichéd connections with. It's a different way to think—trying to tell a story instead of showing off flash." In line with that way of thinking, since the formation of his Experimental Band in 1961 and the founding of the A.A.C.M. in 1965, the incredibly open-eared Abrams has consistently expanded his own vocabulary to include everything from stride to swing to serialism to post-Ornette Coleman, post-Albert Ayler breakthroughs to international musics.

To cite just one example, on his most recent album, last year's brilliant *The Hearinga Suite* (Black Saint), Abrams wittily combined gorgeously written ensembles and thick-textured charts à la Duke and Mingus with blithely skipping playground-type tunes à la Ornette for an eighteen-piece band of first-rate players, including multi-instrumentalist Marty Ehrlich, trumpeters Cecil Bridgewater and Jack Walrath (a Mingus Dynasty veteran), and bassist Fred Hopkins. And in mid-September at New York's Symphony Space, he led an eight-piece ensemble that included six percussionists through the beautifully articulated jazz-meets-gamelan piece "Percussion 26 (1)"; it projected a vivid three-dimensional sonic image as it moved gracefully from section to section. In some ways, it was the conceptual extension of Miles Davis's *On the Corner* (CBS). Abrams will be appearing with his octet from the album *A View From Within* (Black Saint) at the Victoriaville (Quebec) jazz festival in mid-October. And on his new *Blu Blu Blu* (Black Saint), he updates and redefines the gritty electric blues of his Chicago youth: The title cut is dedicated to McKinley Morganfield, *a k a* Muddy Waters. As Abrams characteristically puts it, "It takes me backwards and forwards."

Sub-aural pioneers like Fleming and Dennis—and, for that matter, Abrams himself, whose influence on three generations of musicians via the revolutionary A.A.C.M. is as incalculable as it is largely unknown to the general public—are the knots tying jazz's history together. So when you discover one, there's often a sense of déjà vu, because you've heard his stuff before through the scrim of the folks who've picked up on him. But that's counterbalanced by the wonderful zest of strangeness, which reminds you that you'd only caught the refraction, not the light source itself.

Horace Tapscott is just another outrageously powerful example of this underground current of history and the duality of perception at work. A trombonist until he was sidelined by a car crash in the early 1960s, Tapscott played in his Los Angeles school band with Eric Dolphy and Don Cherry, and he later worked with bandleaders Gerald Wilson and Lionel Hampton. Switching to piano—his mother had trained him—after the accident, he settled back into the Central Avenue scene that had nurtured him. As John Litweiler explains in his definitive *The Freedom Principle: Jazz After 1958* (Da Capo), "Back in 1961, four years before Chicago's AACM, the long-experienced Horace Tapscott founded the Union of


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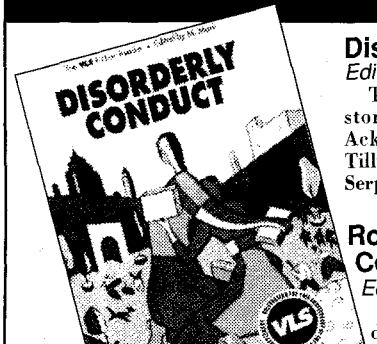


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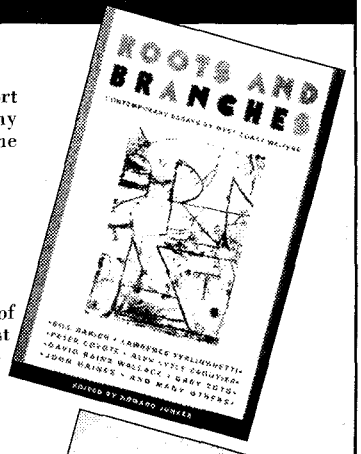


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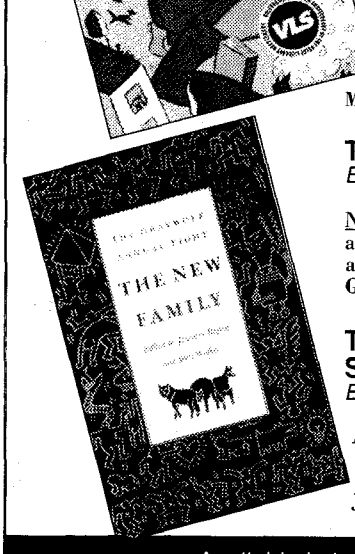


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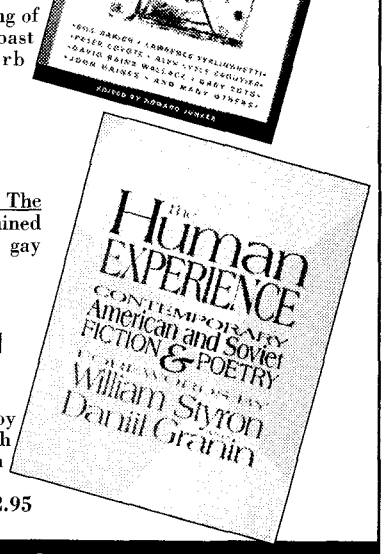


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God's Musicians and Artists Ascension (UGMMA) to produce concerts by his Pan Afrikan Peoples Arkestra." Along with the late clarinet great John Carter and cornetist/trumpeter Bobby Bradford, he helped spawn a new generation that includes David Murray and Arthur Blythe of the World Saxophone Quartet. Blythe, in fact, made his recording debut with Tapscott.

All of which makes the incendiary but disciplined sounds of *The Dark Tree* (hat ART) very welcome indeed. Art Lange's detailed, insightful liner notes point out that Tapscott's releases over the past ten years have rarely made it out of L.A. So this stuffed-to-the-soundbites two-CD set joining Tapscott with Carter, bassist Cecil McBee and drummer Andrew Cyrille opens into a panoramic view, a retrospective culmination of what we've been missing.

As a composer/arranger, Tapscott can wax complexly lyrical, as on the haunting "A Dress for Renee," where he strides from impressionism to ragtime in a beautifully dovetailed art-song ballad. Or he can plug into a genially loping blues-with-a-twist like "Bavarian Mist." But on *The Dark Tree* he focuses primarily on hammering ostinatos that swell into ominous overtones as they power the soloists into post-Ornette territory. With the fabulous rhythm section and soloists the album boasts, that's a recipe for a hypnotic force packing the wallop of Hurricane Bob.

Carter, like Bradford, was a boyhood pal of Ornette; he was also one-fourth of the underrated Clarinet Summit quartet, along with Murray, New Orleans great Alvin Batiste and longtime Ellington sideman Jimmy Hamilton. The group released finely wrought albums during the 1980s on small labels like India Navigation and Black Saint. Although all four reached beyond Benny Goodman's swing and Buddy DeFranco's bebop, Carter in particular brought the reed instrument out of its then somewhat anachronistic status. His astonishingly vocalic clarinet sometimes recalls Dolphy's as it cries and whinnies, sings and screams with a stunningly rhapsodic abandon.

Carter was also, of course, a frighteningly ambitious composer in his own right; his five-album series *Roots and Folklore: Episodes in the Development of American Folk Music* (Black Saint/Gramavision) was one of the outstanding achievements of the eighties. It traces in musical form the intersection of preslavery African civilizations and Western cultures and their ensuing entwined history without ever lapsing into static allegory. Drawing, for instance, on forms of the various periods it covers, from field hollers to blues and swing, it reinterprets those sounds into contemporary idioms, including noise, dissonance and chromaticism, in order to create a compelling sonic narrative. Voices, either scatting or singing pointed lyrics, appear periodically. And fierce ostinatos, like Tapscott's, are used to suggest the thrusting drive of postwar life. But while the series made a number of critics' end-of-the-decade ten-best lists, it didn't make much of a dent in the marketplace, and Carter only got to perform sections of it on a couple of rare occasions, as in an underattended performance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1989.

Local scenes—like the one in the 1960s that Carter, Bradford and Tapscott played key roles in—are more often than not underdocumented in recordings, and the records that do exist are more often than not poorly distributed, since the only true national distribution pipelines

NEAR CHARLES OLSON'S HOME IN WORCESTER

I.

It wasn't Norman Avenue, hardly
six houses deep off Pleasant,
pavement blackened to coal
by February rain.

I walked past the last one,
the third-floor his family had rented,
worried I might be seen in streetlight
below the porch he shot rats from
with his father.

Even then it was garbage
got built up in layers
and Beaver Brook darkened by rust.

The gate to a chain-link fence
stood open at the street's dead end,
and I paced in mud for a moment
wondering what he saw.

II.

The light was dim,
the earth and my shoes
soaked through.

As I strode toward the bright spire
of Blessed Sacrament Church,
I heard the crow
in the sputtering patch of white pine
behind me.

It was the work of it, the fear
in the ink of the page
that I heard.

It was that
the crow came
after I turned
and walked away.

It is the easy thing
to end something, but to carry on,
oh, the work of it,
to remain.

*Jonathan Blunk*

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in the United States are owned and operated by the six major labels. European and small U.S. labels, the usual sources for nonmainstream material, typically either have to depend on a patchwork of regional distributors, who are notoriously unreliable, or else piggyback on a major's network, which leaves their relatively small-selling releases at the mercy of an uninterested sales force. Even the recent major-label reissue *West Coast Hot* (Novus), which collects some terrific Flying Dutchman sides from the Ornette-inflected 1969 Carter-Bradford quartet and Tapscott's 1969 quintet, including an earlier version of "The Dark Tree" that features Blythe, was simply dribbled out unheralded.

Worse still, recording for a small label is not necessarily helpful these days when performers are looking for gigs. Promoters and most club owners, like radio program directors, prefer to deal with artists who have big-company "product" in their pockets, if only because of the promotional budgets that back them. But even if a small- or no-label player lands a live date, it doesn't necessarily follow that it will be covered by the press. The farther away from the media margins you get, the more likely it is that editors want stories tied to current recordings and chart positions. While that's understandable from the standpoint of circulation, it also completes the closing of the vicious circle that ties together recording and distribution control, record company promotion, press coverage and airplay. (To get a hint of how that circle can work, take a look at the enormous orchestrated media attention that a commercially successful rock band like Guns N' Roses can currently command.) So whether you're a jazz or rock musician, more often than not you won't get noticed if you don't have a big record on a big label, except in ever-decreasing segments of the music press and the occasional review in a local daily or alternative weekly paper. And thus your anonymity and the One Great Tradition theory become mutually reinforcing.

At least some of the many music festivals held around the United States every summer try to correct that misperception partially by featuring local artists along with national headliners. The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, for instance, puts the big touring acts on two stages, and reserves the many small stages and tents for regional musicians who generally have no record deals and rarely, if ever, get outside the Deep South. There you could have seen saxophonist Edward "Kidd" Jordan, an omnivorous player who's willing and able to share the stage with boppers, lounge lizards, free jazzers and rappers alike. Later in the summer you could have caught him at the edges of the Chicago Jazz Festival, where he hooked up with some of Chicago's little-known legends at South End Music-Works, a small loft-style venue. Along with saxophonists Fred Anderson and Douglas Ewart, Art Ensemble of Chicago bassist Malachi Favors and drummer Dushun Mosley, he created a Pharaoh Sanders–inspired set full of dynamically shifting overtones so finely calibrated that the room itself felt like it had begun to vibrate.

Like the New Orleans shindig, the Chicago fest always includes regional acts, such as pianist John Young, violinist Johnny Frigo or second-generation A.A.C.M. member Vandy Harris, who usually don't get out of the Windy City. And because it's free to the public in lakeside Grant Park, it draws curious crowds who, in the course of any evening's varied program, can get turned on to music they didn't know anything about. Like any big festival, it also acts as a magnet that energizes more outboard segments of the local scene. Since folks from around the country come to town for it, after-hours jams at small clubs like South End or Joe Segal's Jazz Showcase can introduce the curious to new sounds, like the music of Hal Russell.

Like Tapscott in L.A., multi-instrumentalist Russell is an offbeat local institution in Chicago, an elder statesman who works consistently with younger players, most of whom also double on various instruments. Russell's music, however, stays pretty far from the dark anger that fuels much of Tapscott's. His NRG Ensemble can slide easily from broad vaudevillian humor to outside blowing, sometimes in the space of a few bars. So on *Conserving NRG* (PJP), the quintet swerves from off-the-wall ensembles to pure blasts of angular improvisations to wickedly funny jump-cuts and parodies, while *Hal on Earth* (Hal Russell Music) boasts a hilarious medley-tribute to Fred Astaire, complete with the sound of dancing feet.

This fall, Russell will be doing a few rare dates around North America, starting with the Victoriaville jazz festival in Canada. Check your local listings to find out if his weird spacecraft has targeted your town. If not, try to hang on until spring of next year, when ECM, a decent-sized German label with reasonably credible U.S. distribution, will release *The Finnish-Swiss Tour.* It should be the first Russell album to make it out of Chicago, except for the copies the man himself sells from the stage at the end of every performance. □

# EXCHANGE.

(*Continued From Page 466*)

we won't get far politically or morally. One somehow expects more generosity and justice from the left than from others, and when it isn't there, well, no wonder so few people heed us or seem moved by the crimped and self-enclosed visions we offer.

Now, Judith Brady. The point is that the prejudice at work is a *cultural* prejudice: a set of biases so deeply hidden in thought they affect us all regardless of gender or political preference. Surely Brady knows prejudice need not include the power to oppress, though obviously that makes it worse. Jews, for instance, can be prejudiced against African-Americans, or African-Americans against Jews, though members of both groups are subject to more oppression from others than from one another. And it should be clear too that poor and minority men are often subject as children and adults—in classrooms, say, or welfare offices—to prejudice (and oppression) from both men *and* women in authority.

Then there's the unfortunate phrase "chickens coming home to roost." The clear implication of those words is that any individual man, whatever his station or condition, must somehow suffer, deservedly, for what other, or all, men have done. Such an attitude prevents anyone, even the virtuous Brady, from seeing individual people objectively or sympathetically or understanding who they are or what they need. That's prejudice—whether it comes from the left or the right.

As for Maria Foscarinis's comments, here the issue is more subtle and important. Let's stipulate at the start that housing, wages and jobs are critical areas requiring vast changes in policy and priorities. But that's not all there is to homelessness. Note something here: The years that saw the deterioration of housing and the growth of homelessness also saw reductions in care for the mentally ill; the appearance on our streets of large numbers of Vietnam vets; huge increases in the use of destructive drugs and in the numbers of children born to young and unmarried women unable to care for them; and an influx of immigrants that changed the nature of neighborhoods in every major American city. To understand that these events played a part in the growth of homelessness doesn't mean that housing and work aren't important; it simply means that the crisis now involves *more* than housing and work.

The fact is that many of those now in our streets *are* among the most troubled or de-

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prived citizens of the nation—in every way. It is not, after all, surprising that in a troubled economy and a competitive society it is often those who have been previously traumatized, or those with the fewest skills and least hope, or those without private (as well as public) systems of support who have the hardest time surviving or end up on the streets.

I am troubled by the strategy currently adopted by homeless advocates who narrow the needs of the homeless to one or two things and then try to enlist public sympathy by arguing that the homeless "are just like you and me" or that we are all "one check away from homelessness." That isn't true. Such an approach may muddy rather than clear the waters. One example: A goodly proportion of families on the streets or on welfare are headed by young women who had children before they had skills, degrees, long-term mates or any conceivable hope of surviving on their own or caring adequately for children. Of course such women need and deserve attention, housing, education and jobs. But saying that doesn't cut to the root of the problem, which has something to do with what's happening among us socially and psychologically as well as economically.

All of this makes the task of liberal or radical advocates very difficult. For we must go deeper than we have and try—no matter how hard it is—to convince Americans to allow into their moral frames of reference precisely those they now exclude and who turn up homeless: the different, the supposedly "deviant," the alien, the unfamiliar. That's the real task. To pretend otherwise is a mistake, for unless we frame complex questions in appropriate and sufficient terms, the solutions we get—*if* we get solutions—will be neither appropriate nor sufficient. And that will be tragic. *Peter Marin*

### AMPLIFICATION

In Letty Cottin Pogrebin's September 23 article, "Different Kinds of Survival," her mention of "Public Enemy, whose best-selling record called Jews 'Christ killers,' " was not a direct quotation from song lyrics but a paraphrase of their song "Welcome to the Terrordome," which includes the lyrics "Crucifixion ain't no fiction/So called chosen frozen/Apology made to who ever pleases/Still they got me like Jesus." Although the quotation marks were inappropriate, the author stands by the meaning inferred from the lyrics.

*The Nation* welcomes letters—typed, double spaced and no longer than 300 words, please. Letters may be edited for reasons of space. Our policy is to publish as many letters as possible, but inevitably a backlog develops, so please bear with us.

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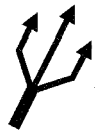

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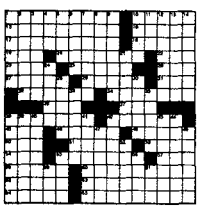

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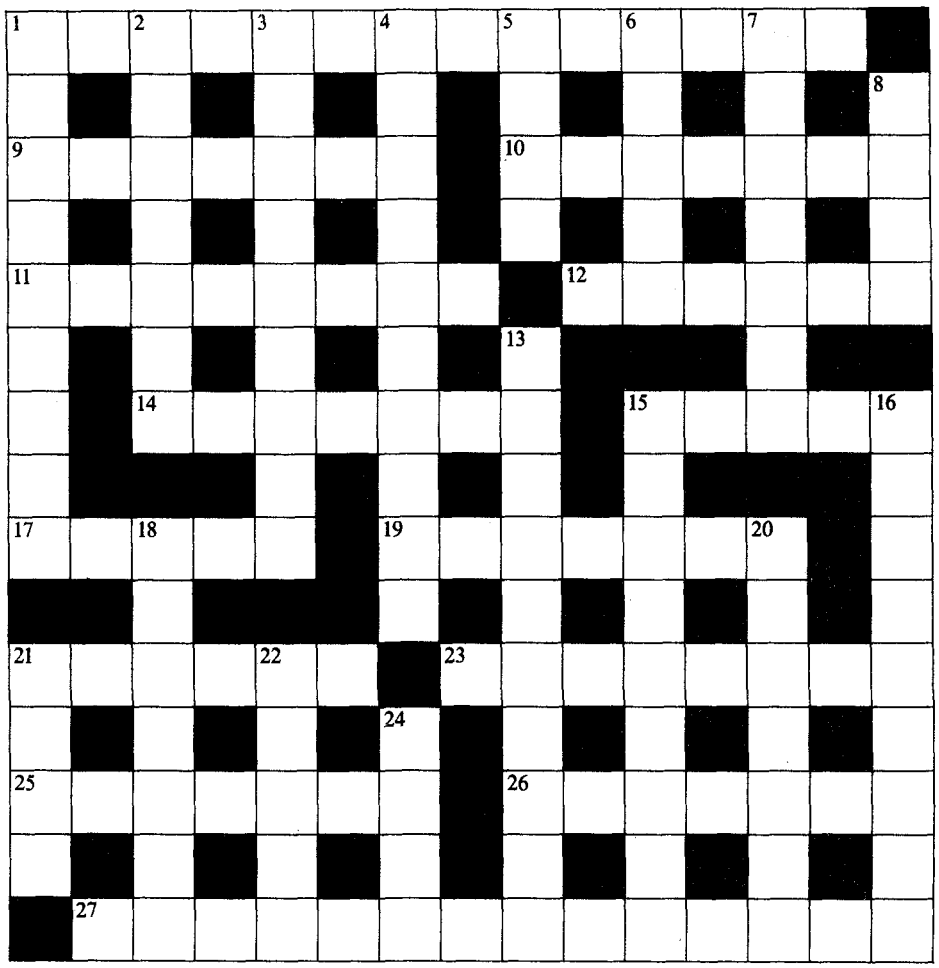

### ACROSS

1 Well, it meant goodbye to divided Germany, at least! (3,11)
9 The old sailor is given something to shoot for! (7)
10 A classic example of a circular letter? (7)
11, 12 and 21 down A zebra type to Londoners? Ay, there's this in Shakespeare with a good image of what Caesar was doing as a final gesture! (8,3,7)
14 What good lookers take to be mates for the silly fools, reputedly! (7)
15 All right! A mixed type of ruminant will do for it! (5)
17 One of the Perons of the French to get round, obviously. (5)
19 Does it imply a cool manner, or just a slippery quality? (7)
21 Displayed by the character of Dostoyevsky? (7)
23 Stagecraft associated with G & S, something to stick with previously. (8)
25 It's nothing to take transportation in a thing you might blow air with. (7)
26 What the scouts did might be stepped on, around the Poe version. (7)
27 Bull fiddle, soon changed by low-down members of a different section! (6-8)

### DOWN

1 Does painting one cut off the air supply and make it turn into a vegetable? (9)
2 Animal hair, not short but you might want a horse to make it in record time. (7)
3 Essentially where to look for the moving force of Paris. (2,7)
4 Cut one off, and it is in herd formation. (10)
5 and 24 Someone like Othello comes up with a spouse one who might hope that two can live as cheap as one. (8)
6 The id seems to be essential to her makeup! (5)
7 In the old country it's not exactly true, with gaseous substance rising. (7)
8 Don't pay any attention to certain bread forms when they are rising! (4)
13 A strip said to be possibly what was popular in living rooms once. (10)
15 Those who run things such as *Il Trovatore* sort of an anagram. (9)
16 Indirect intimations of 9 in English, 1 in French and 2 in Spanish. (9)
18 One who draws cartoons doesn't quite finish, which is a sign that things should be lively . . . (7)
20 . . . and a sign of autumn. (7)
21 See 11 across
22 One-hundred-legged get-up? (5)
24 See 5 down

### PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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